READING THE OVIDIAN HEROINE

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KATHRYN L. MCKINLEY

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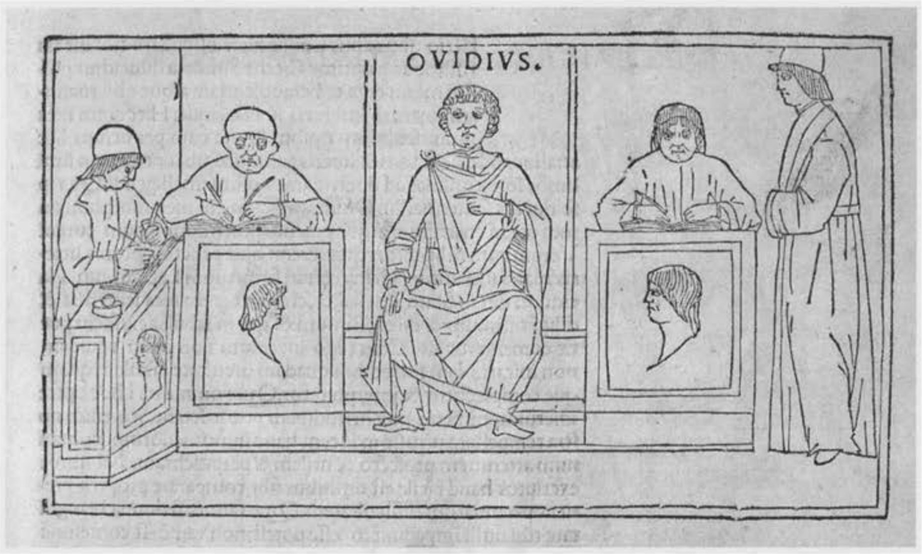

Ovid with his commentators. *Ovidius*, ed. Bonus Accursius (Venice, 1492-98). London, British Library, C.3.C.4, fol. a1 r. Used by permission.

READING THE OVIDIAN HEROINE

"Metamorphoses" Commentaries 1100-1618

BY

KATHRYN L. MCKINLEY

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For my parents

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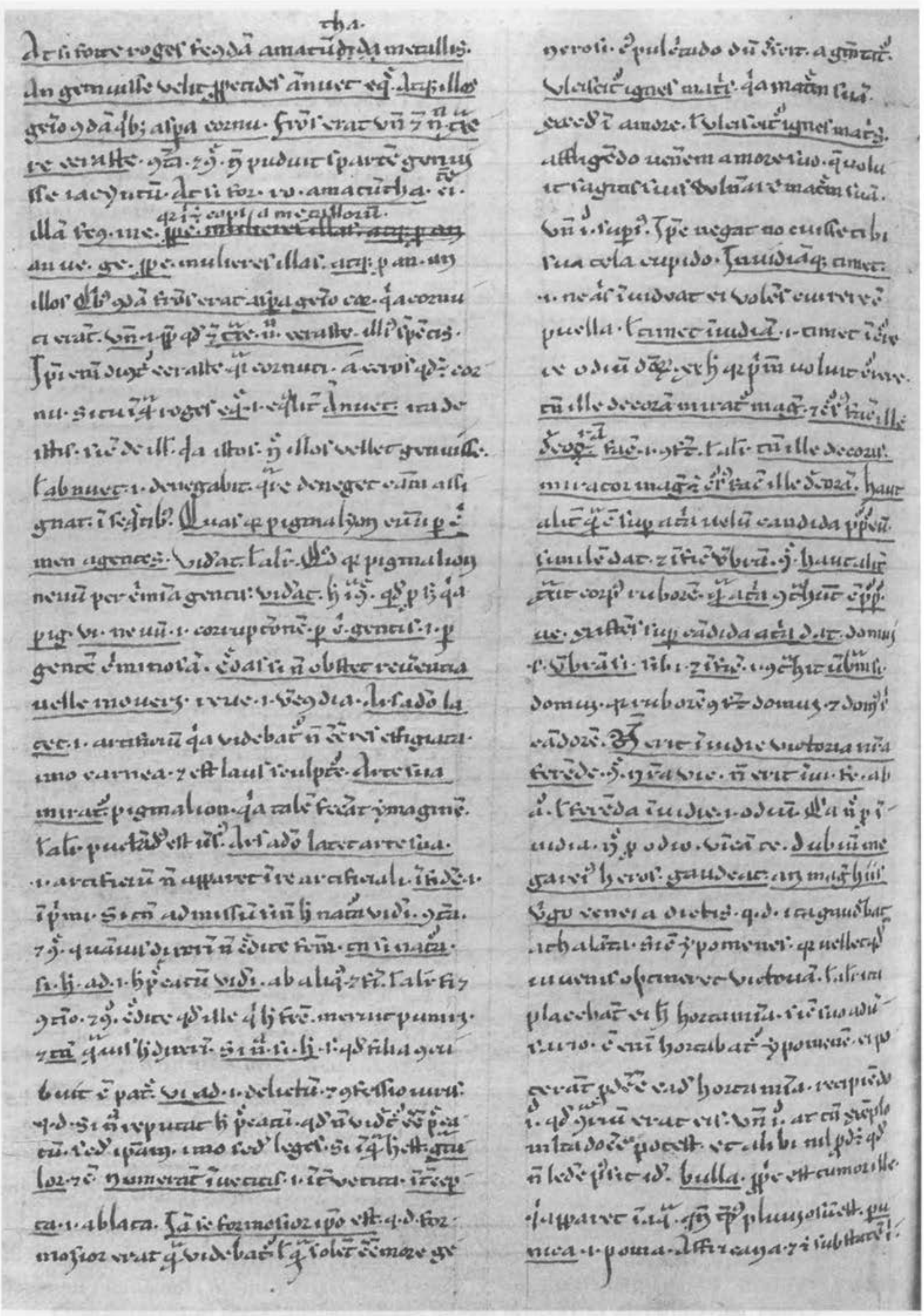

Plate 1. William of Orléans, *Bursarii Ovidianorum* (Orléans, early thirteenth century). Berlin, Staatsbibliothek Preussischer Kulturbesitz, MS. Lat. qu. 219, fol. 90v. Used by permission.

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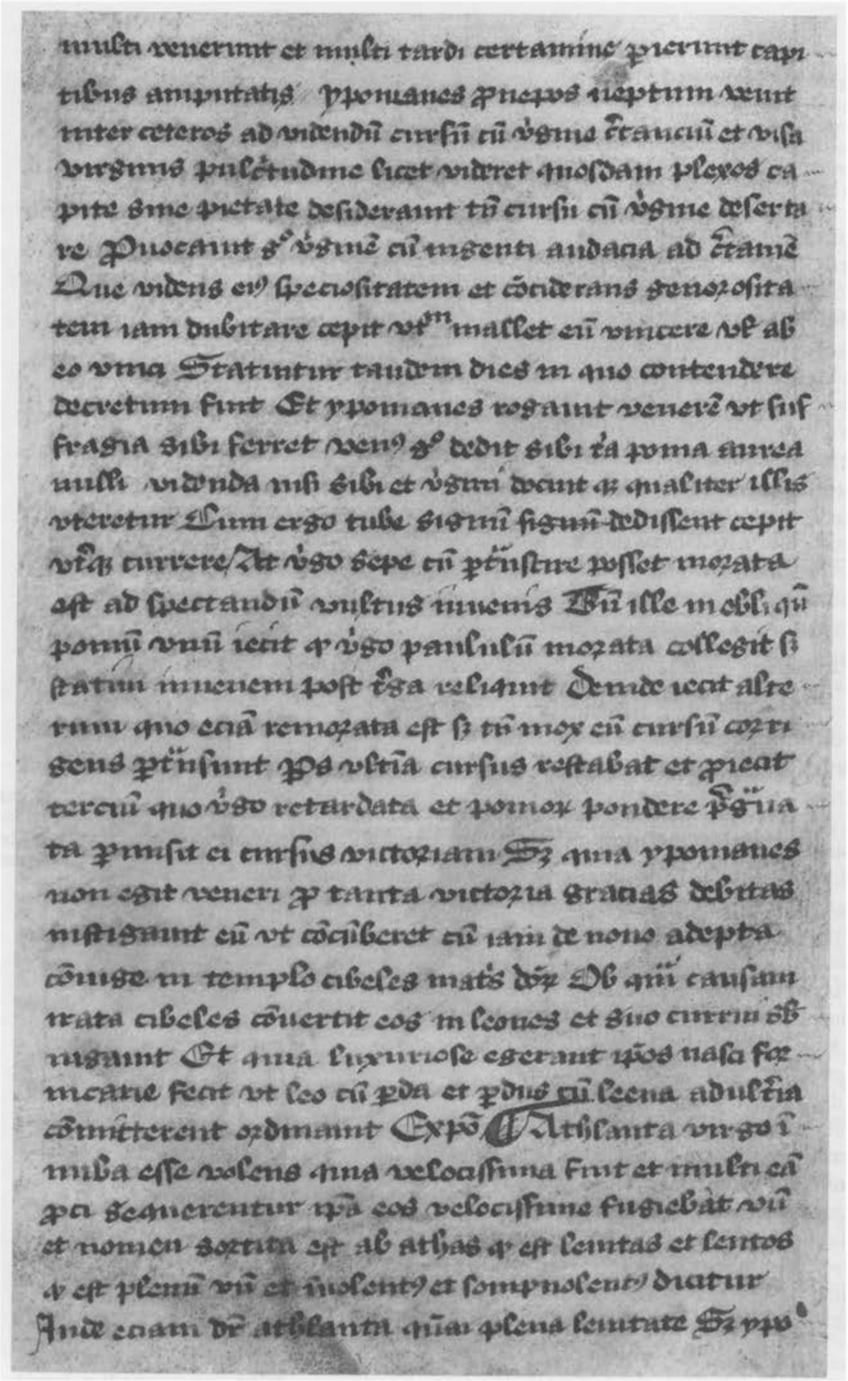

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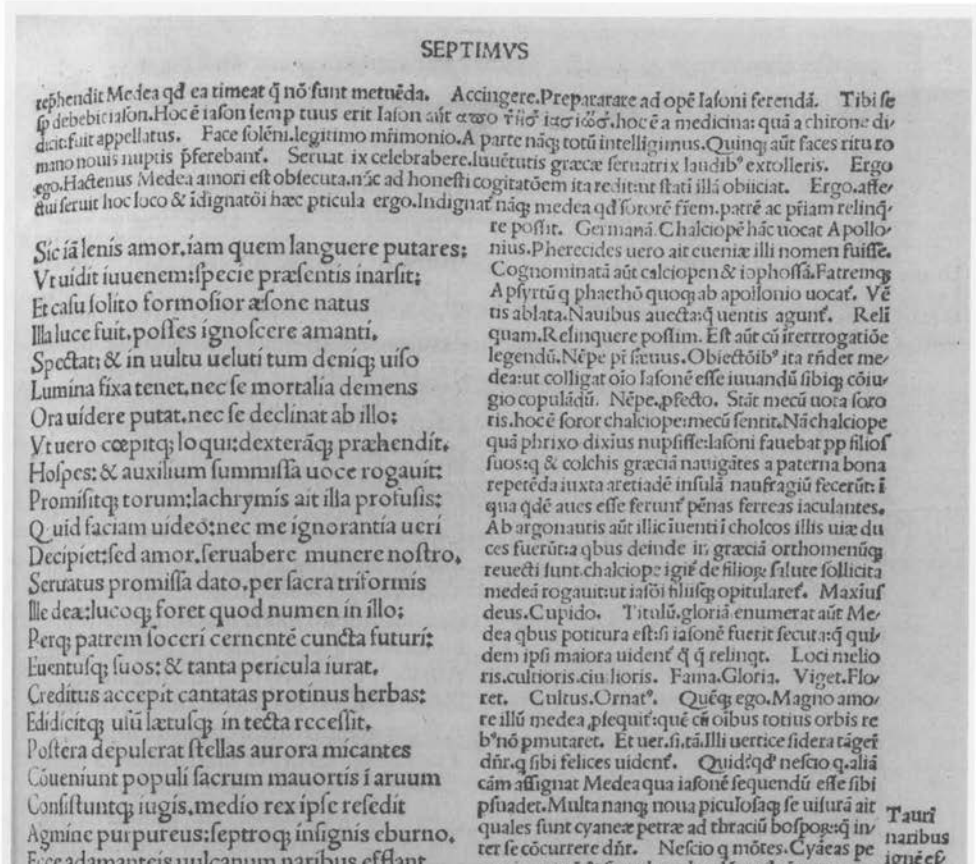

SEPTIMVS

rephendit Medea qđ ea timeat q̄ nō ſunt metuēda. Accingere. Preparatare ad opē Iaſoni ferendā. Tibi ſe ſp debebit iaſon. Hoc ē iaſon ſemp tuus erit Iaſon aūt απο τῆσ ιασεωσ. hoc ē a medicina: quā a chirone didicit fuit appellatus. Face ſoléni. legitimo mrimonio. A parte nāq; totū intelligimus. Quinq; aūt faces ritu romano nouis nuptiis pferebant. Seruat ix celebrabere. Iuuētutis græcæ ſeruatrix laudib⁹ extolleris. Ergo ego. Hactenus Medea amori eſt obſecuta. nūc ad honeſti cogitatōem ita redit: ut ſtati illā obiiciat. Ergo. affectui ſeruit hoc loco & idignatōi hæc pticula ergo. Indignat nāq; medea qđ ſororē frēm. patrē ac priam relinquere poſſit. Germanā. Chalciopē hāc uocat Apollonius. Pherecides uero ait eueniæ illi nomen fuiſſe. Cognominatā aūt calciopen & iophoſſā. Fatremq; Apſyrtū q phaethō quoq; ab apollonio uocat. Vētis ablata. Nauibus auecta: q̄ uentis agunt. Reliquam. Relinquere poſſim. Eſt aūt cū īterrogatiōe legendū. Nēpe pi ſæuus. Obiectōib⁹ ita rndet medea: ut colligat oio Iaſonē eſſe iuuandū ſibiq; cōiugio copulādū. Nēpe. pfecto. Stāt mecū uota ſororis. hoc ē ſoror chalciope: mecū ſentit. Nā chalciope quā phrixo dixius nupſiſſe: Iaſoni fauebat pp filios ſuos: q & colchis græciā nauigātes a paterna bona repetēda iuxta aretiadē inſulā naufragiū fecerūt: ī qua qdē aues eſſe ferunt pēnas ferreas iaculantes. Ab argonautis aūt illic īuenti ī cholcos illis uiæ duces fuerūt: a qbus deinde in græciā orthomenūq; reuecti ſunt. chalciope igit de filiorum ſalute ſollicita medeā rogauit: ut iaſōi filiiſq; opitularet. Maxiuſ deus. Cupido. Titulū. gloriā enumerat aūt Medea qbus potitura eſt: ſi iaſonē fuerit ſecuta: q̄ quidem ipſi maiora uident q̄ q̄ relinqt. Loci melioris. cultioris. ciuilioris. Fama. Gloria. Viget. Floret. Cultus. Ornat⁹. Quēq; ego. Magno amore illū medea pſequit: quē cū oibus totius orbis reb⁹ nō pmutaret. Et uer. ſi. tā. Illi uertice ſidera tāgerē dnr. q ſibi felices uident. Quid: qđ neſcio q. aliā cām aſſignat Medea qua iaſonē ſequendū eſſe ſibi pſuadet. Multa nanq; noua piculoſaq; ſe uiſurā ait quales ſunt cyaneæ petræ ad thraciū boſporum: q̄ inter ſe cōcurrere dnr. Neſcio q mōtes. Cyāeas petras innuit: q̄ & ſymplegades dnr: qđ cōcurrere ac copulari uidētur. Ratibuſq; inimica charybdis. uorago ē in freto ſiculo naues ad ſe trahēs atq; abſorbens. Scylla rapax. Scylla phorci filia ueneniſ circes in mōſtrum cōuerſa ſe in fretū ſiculū pcipitauit ubi nauibus fingit inſidiari. Sūt aūt loca in freto ſiculo ualde piculoſa: Scylla & charybdis: quorum alter italiæ. Scylla uero adiacet ſiciliæ. Siculo pfundo. in ſiculo freto. Coniugiū ne putas. Rōne a ſcelere Medea reuocat. Se aūt ipſa rephendit: qđ facinori ſuo honeſtū matrimonii nomē ptendat. Specioſa pulchra & honeſta. Quin. immo. Aſpice. cōſidera. Dū licet. dū potes. Rectū. honeſtū. Pietas. in parētes & priam amor. Et uicta dabat. Iam inquit cupido ab honeſto & pietate uictus a Medeæ mēte recedebat. Ibat ad antiquas hecates perſeidos aras hecate: ut ſcribit Dionyſi⁹ mileſius filia fuit perſei ſolis filii. In illis nāq; locis duo ſolis filii nati ſunt pſe⁹ & æeta. quorum alter colchis circa mæotidē paludē impauit. perſeus uero ī taurica regiōe regnauit: q cū grādior natu eſſet: uxorē duxit unā ex incolis nymphis ex qua Hecatē filiā ſuſcepit: q

Sic iā lenis amor. iam quem languere putares:
Vt uidit iuuenem: ſpecie præſentis inarſit:
Et caſu ſolito formoſior æſone natus
Illa luce fuit. poſſes ignoſcere amanti.
Spectat: & in uultu ueluti tum deniq; uiſo
Lumina fixa tenet. nec ſe mortalia demens
Ora uidere putat. nec ſe declinat ab illo:
Vt uero cœpitq; loqui: dexterāq; prahendit.
Hoſpes: & auxilium ſummiſſa uoce rogauit:
Promiſitq; torum: lachrymis ait illa profuſis:
Quid faciam uideo: nec me ignorantia ueri
Decipiet: ſed amor. ſeruabere munere noſtro.
Seruatus promiſſa dato. per ſacra triformis
Ille deæ: lucoq; foret quod numen in illo:
Perq; patrem ſoceri cernentē cuncta futuri:
Euentuſq; ſuos: & tanta pericula iurat.
Creditus accepit cantatas protinus herbas:
Edidicitq; uſū lætuſq; in tecta receſſit.
Poſtera depulerat ſtellas aurora micantes
Cōueniunt populi ſacrum mauortis ī aruum
Conſiſtuntq; iugis. medio rex ipſe reſedit
Agmine purpureus: ſeptroq; inſignis eburno.
Ecce adamanteis uulcanum naribus efflant
Aeripedes tauri tactæq; uaporibus herbæ
Ardent. utq; ſolent pleni reſonare camini;
Aut ubi terrena ſilices fornace ſoluti
Concipiunt ignē liquidarum aſpergine aquarum:
Pectora ſic itus clauſas uoluentia flammas.
Gutturaq; uſta ſonant. tamē illis æſone natus
Obuius it. uertere truces uenientis ad ora
Terribiles uultus: præfixaq; cornua ferro.
Puluereumq; ſolum pede pulſauere biſulco:
Fumificiſq; locum mugitibus īpleuere.
Diriguere metu ſubito minyæ. ille nec ullos
Senſit anhelatus. tantū medicamina poſſunt.
Pendulaq; audaci mulcet palearia dextra:
Suppoſitoſq; iugo pondus graue cogit aratri
Ducere: & inſuetum ferro proſcindere cāpū.
Mirantur colchi. minyæ clamoribus augent
Adiciuntq; animos. galea tum ſumit ahena.

Tauri naribus ignē efflantes

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Plate 4. Raphael Regius, *Enarrationes* (Venice, 1497). London, British Library, IB 23971, fol. i.iiii r. Used by permission.

INTRODUCTION

Ovid has long been regarded as one of the most popular classical poets in the high and later Middle Ages; thus classical scholar Ludwig Traube called the twelfth and thirteenth centuries the *aetas Ovidiana*. Ovid's following was great both on the Continent and in England; such poets as Jean de Meun and Geoffrey Chaucer drew extensively from the Roman poet's works. Often Ovidian presence in the literary culture of the Middle Ages has been associated with arts of love drawn from the *Ars Amatoria*; indeed the latter is the focus of the most recent book on Ovid's influence on Chaucer's poetry.[1] While Ovidian arts of love are certainly ubiquitous in medieval literature, from manuscript evidence it appears that in the Middle Ages, Ovid's *Metamorphoses* may have had an even more far-reaching influence. Writing in the shadow of Virgil's recent triumph with the *Aeneid*, Ovid chose to radically refashion the epic genre for his own purposes, dispensing with the traditional singular hero and unified plotline required by Aristotle, and creating instead a collective poem after the fashion of his esteemed Greek predecessor, Callimachus. Like Callimachus and the "neoteric" poets, Ovid chose to foreground cyclic narrative and highly personal subject matter in his *Metamorphoses*. E. J. Kenney has observed of Ovid that each "of his surviving works represents a new literary departure, an unpredictable and individual variation on inherited themes and techniques."[2] Indeed, for Ovid a central project in the *Metamorphoses* is precisely the representation and exploration of the psychological quandaries and dilemmas of a multitude of heroines in books 6–10. That is, one of Ovid's transformations with epic itself is to "feminize" its treatment of narrative in some sense: to focus on the inner, the subjective, the psychological.

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[1] See Michael Calabrese, *Chaucer's Ovidian Arts of Love* (Gainesville, 1994). John Fyler, in his *Chaucer and Ovid* (New Haven, 1979), shows a similar inclination: his stated focus is Ovid's *Ars Amatoria*, *Remedia Amoris*, and *Amores* (17). See also *Desiring Discourse: The Literature of Love, Ovid through Chaucer*, eds. James Paxson and Cynthia Gravlee (Selinsgrove, 1998).

[2] Kenney, "Ovid," in E. J. Kenney and W. V. Clausen, eds., *The Cambridge History of Classical Literature. Vol II: Latin Literature* (Cambridge, 1982), 455.

This study seeks to consider Ovid's representations of the heroine's inner world in the *Metamorphoses*, and the ways in which his psychological portraits were read and responded to by medieval and Renaissance commentators, editors, and translators. Although there are problematic aspects to the agency and voice Ovid creates in many of his heroines, in many ways he charts wholly new territory in his explorations of conscience and intentionality. These innovations were not lost on medieval and early modern commentators; however, modern scholarship has not given due attention to this important aspect of the hermeneutics of reading classical texts in the Middle Ages and early modern period. Medieval and early modern clerical writings are sometimes misrepresented as employing only a praise/blame hermeneutics with regard to the feminine. This study presents a corrective to the polarizing view, offering a picture necessarily more complicated and varied. What emerges from a rereading of many Ovid commentaries, is in fact a more complex, more heterogeneous picture of the medieval "commentary tradition." Indeed, there appear to have been many "traditions." Each medieval and early modern "reader" treated here, whether offering a summary, commentary, and/or edition, must engage Ovid's use of the feminine in the *Metamorphoses* (as in the *Heroides*) to represent psychological conflict and self-interrogation; the results are rich and varied and therefore provide a more complicated (thus more historically accurate) view of the ways in which Ovid's heroines were read from the fifth through the seventeenth centuries. I will be considering a range of medieval and early modern "readings" of Ovid's representations of the heroine's inner landscape, from exegetical to editorial; the commentaries and editions themselves provide a broad cross-section of readerships, from France to England to Italy to Germany.

Since my focus will be the Ovidian heroine and the representation of her mental, emotional, and psychological landscape in the *Metamorphoses*, I wish to comment here on the use of language in this study to refer to literary representations of the feminine. When I use the words "female," "male," and their linguistic and semantic kin in the discussion below, I do not wish to essentialize or to suggest that a certain trait or type of discourse is specifically the province of one sex over another. I have found Froma Zeitlin's analysis of gender in ancient Greek literature and culture a useful model: while she recognizes undeniable problems in the representation of the fem-

inine in the classical period, she also eschews the totalizing words "patriarchal" and "misogynist":

> That an apparent symmetry appears in the pairing of male/female does not disguise the fundamental, even disabling, asymmetry in status, rank, and power . . . No amount of wishful thinking, no strenuous efforts to recover an imagined feminine society, whether mythic or real, past or present, would, in my opinion, redress the serious imbalances. At the same time, power is not monolithic, either in concept or in exercise. It can and must be defined differentially, as official or unofficial, juridical or ritual, overt or covert, or at times, even jointly claimed and wielded . . . my focus falls on the idea of inclusion, not exclusion in approaching the question of the feminine.[3]

In this study, what I will consider is the range of ways in which Ovid and his medieval and early modern commentators all negotiate issues of gender and subjectivity within their own cultural settings (even if the chronological parameters of this study preclude a thorough historicizing of each commentator's work). I fully recognize Ovid's problematic status in terms of his representations of the feminine; rather than offering any "final word" on Ovid in this respect, I seek rather to explore aspects of his treatment of the feminine which have not received due scholarly attention, so as to further broaden already complicated scholarly discussions of Ovid and the "woman question." In addition to considering the Ovidian heroine both on Ovid's turf and on that of his later commentators, I will also examine several male characters in the *Metamorphoses* (Orpheus, Pygmalion, Hippomenes), whose portrayal illumines further the question of gender in Ovid. Zeitlin's approach to the representation of gender in Greek tragedy has strongly influenced and informed my own thinking about the portrayal of the self in Ovid's *Metamorphoses*; I will return to her stance in further detail below.

In this study, when I use the term "subjectivity," I refer to the character's ability to manifest some degree of authentic volition and agency *within* the unavoidable constraints culture, gender, society, class, and a host of other variables impose upon her. Rita Felski observes that "gender is only one of the many determining influences upon subjectivity, ranging from macrostructures such as class, nationality,

[3] Zeitlin, *Playing the Other: Gender and Society in Classical Greek Literature* (Chicago, 1996), 7, 8.

and race down to microstructures such as the accidents of personal history, which do not simply exist alongside gender distinctions, but actively influence and are influenced by them."[4] Granted that no act of volition is absolutely free of a range of cultural influences and forces, there remains the (albeit limited) possibility of agency, to differing degrees, in different classical and medieval female characters. My interest in this area is to explore the nature of the intentionality with which Ovid and his medieval and early modern readers endowed their female subjects. Contrary to Julia Kristeva's view, the beginnings of the western literary phenomenon, or representation, of subjectivity are not necessarily limited to the advent of Christianity;[5] or to the writings of St. Augustine, as David Aers has argued in a critique of claims that the early modern period marks the "true" birth of subjectivity.[6] In fact, Euripides and Catullus, models for Ovid's exploration of the psyche, offer profoundly moving illustrations of the subject's self-analysis. And while Ovid's development of the heroine's interiority is far from unproblematic, it nevertheless provides us with a character's most searching explorations of conscience and intentionality.

The question of an historical emergence of the subject has fascinated both medieval and early modern scholars in recent decades. Caroline Walker Bynum has rightly asked whether the twelfth century was, as has often been claimed, the birth of certain types of representations of the subject and the self.[7] She suggests the "rediscovery"[8] rather than the "discovery" of the individual, but she also situates this historical development within the context of social groups just forming in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. Gerald Bond focuses on the "rise of a new secular culture in France during the

---

[4] Rita Felski, *Beyond Feminist Aesthetics: Feminist Literature and Social Change* (Cambridge, 1989), 59.

[5] Julia Kristeva, *The Powers of Horror: An Essay on Abjection*, trans. L. S. Roudiez (New York, 1982), 113.

[6] David Aers, "A Whisper in the Ear of Early Modernists; or, Reflections on Literary Critics Writing the 'History of the Subject,'" *Culture and History 1350–1600: Essays on English Communities, Identities and Writing*, ed. David Aers (Detroit, 1992), 177–202. Aers' corrective is important; however, I would situate the origins of the representation of subjectivity in western literature somewhat earlier.

[7] Caroline Walker Bynum, *Jesus as Mother* (Berkeley, 1982), chapter 3, "Did the Twelfth Century Discover the Individual?"

[8] Bynum, *Jesus as Mother*, 106; Bynum adopts this word from other scholars, such as John Benton, "Consciousness of Self and 'Personality'," *Renaissance and Renewal in the Twelfth Century*, ed. Robert L. Benson and Giles Constable (Cambridge, 1982), 263–95.

half century or so around 1100," a new subculture articulating "the importance and worth of individual existence" through its representations of eloquence and desire, both "widely judged dangerous."[9] Bond also distinguishes between the subject and *persona*, or impersonation, arguing that Romanesque literature's deployment of impersonation reflects a new narrative form of self-reflection.[10] Similar types of arguments have been advanced recently for an emergence of the subject in early modern culture.[11] However, while I wish to set forth Ovid's representations of the feminine as one classical model for later literary depictions of self-awareness and self-analysis, I do so with several important qualifications. First, when I discuss the word "subject" and aspects of subjectivity in Ovid, I wish to make a distinction between literary representations of subjectivity (whether in Ovid's heroines, medieval saints' lives, or early modern drama, for example) and the far more elusive, if retrievable, evidence for an "emerging" subject in any of these periods. In this study I do not wish to claim that Ovid's depiction of female introspection is representative of a developing subjectivity in Roman culture, since his heroines' monologues are so largely constructed in generic terms, drawn from the monologues of classical tragedy and other rhetorical traditions. Nor do I wish to argue for a type of "realism" in Ovid's characterizations in the twentieth-century sense of that word. It is, however, possible to see Ovid taking steps to increase the heroine's capacity for self-interrogation, and such steps help to counter limiting representations of women in these periods. What the heroine's interior debates do suggest is that, as an author, Ovid was certainly aware of the human propensity to reflect upon one's choices and loyalties. As Peter Brown has put it in reference to the early Christian era, "men used women 'to think with.'"[12] Bynum has helpfully discussed this issue in her study of Cistercian maternal imagery. Although the clerics[13] commenting on Ovid in subsequent chapters

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[9] Gerald Bond, *The Loving Subject: Desire, Eloquence and Power in Romanesque France* (Philadelphia, 1995), 1, 4.

[10] Bond, *The Loving Subject*, 6–10.

[11] Valerie Traub, M. Lindsay Kaplan, and Sympna Callaghan, eds., *Feminist Readings of Early Modern Culture: Emerging Subjects* (Cambridge, 1996).

[12] Peter Brown, *The Body and Society: Men, Women, and Sexual Renunciation in Early Christianity* (New York, 1988), 153.

[13] I am employing the word "cleric" broadly in this study, to reflect the range of meanings this word took on in the Middle Ages and early modern period (including a cleric in orders; a cleric not in orders or ordained; or a scholar/teacher at a school or university).

are not Cistercian, her observations seem appropriate in the larger context of the ways in which medieval commentators (mostly clerics) viewed the feminine. Bynum characterizes some modern attempts to recover the lived life of women in the Middle Ages through clerical texts:

> Some [scholars] went even further, attempting to correlate conceptions of the feminine or female images with real opportunities for women either in society at large or within the Christian community. A simple distinction was often lost sight of: the female (or woman) and the feminine are not the same. The former is a person of one gender; the latter may be an aspect of either gender. Thus the attitudes of a man toward the feminine (as distinct from women) may reflect not so much his attitudes toward his mother, his sister, females in his community, what attracts him sexually, and so forth, as his sense of the feminine aspects of himself. . . . The Cistercian conception of Jesus as mother and abbot as mother reveals not an attitude toward women but a sense (not without ambivalence) of a need and obligation to nurture other men, a need and obligation to achieve intimate dependence on God.[14]

Although I would not argue that Ovid commentators use maternal or feminine imagery from the same motivations as these Cistercian clerics do, what does often emerge in medieval and early modern commentaries is thoughtful engagement with Ovid's character psychology (displayed most often in the heroine); as Zeitlin, Brown, and Bynum have argued, the feminine offers a category which is "good to think with."

I will discuss below some of the more specific problems attending this classical and medieval penchant to use the feminine to voice male anxieties and to embody the earliest literary representations of introspection. Yet throughout this study, I wish to delimit my usage of the terms *subject* and *subjectivity* to literary and narrative semantic fields, rather than to assume that literary constructions of the subject are coextensive with or truly representative of the classical, medieval, or early modern "self" in any historical sense. If I use the word "authentic" at times to characterize a representation of subjectivity, it is not to imply that Ovid's—or a commentator's later construction—is a historically accurate reflection of the self in the period in question (since this is necessarily so difficult to recover) but

[14] Bynum, *Jesus as Mother*, 167.

rather that the author's characterization approaches a type of psychological complexity which makes the heroine and her conflicts seem more palpably human and less stylized, less fictive. What Ovid did, within the limitations of poetic and narrative fiction, was to construct a feminine subject with a substantially increased capacity for reflection and self-interrogation—in ways never before charted in the history of western literary narrative. That it took twelve centuries (the beginnings of the Old French romance) before a male character could regularly be endowed with similar psychological interiority and similar inner monologues is a sobering commentary upon the limited constructions of the masculine in classical and medieval narrative poetry.[15]

Ovid has long been hailed for his portraits of abandoned heroines, particularly in the *Heroides*. Classical literature in general shows a penchant for exploration of female characters' psychological states; and Ovid, more than any other classical poet, explores in depth a range of female characters' dilemmas, particularly as each teases out the ramifications of a profound conflict of loyalties. Although the *Heroides* do offer illustrations of Ovid's skill in dramatizing the heroine's psychological quandary, this study will focus on the *Metamorphoses*' heroines exclusively for several reasons. The female characters of the *Heroides* have received the burden of scholarly attention,[16] while the heroines of the *Metamorphoses* have been given comparatively less focus; yet manuscript evidence points to stronger interest in the *Metamorphoses* in the later Middle Ages.[17] Secondly, the epistolary

[15] In the *Metamorphoses*, Narcissus (book 3), Cephalus (book 7), and Orpheus (book 10) are exceptions; however, only Cephalus is given a long lament, and it presents regret for past actions rather than offering extensive deliberation over a future course of action (as is more common with Ovid's heroines).

[16] See, for example, Florence Verducci, *Ovid's Toyshop of the Heart*; Sheila Delany, *The Naked Text* (Berkeley, 1994); Debora Shuger, *The Renaissance Bible* (Berkeley, 1994), chapter 5; Marina Scordilis Brownlee, *The Severed Word: Ovid's Heroides and the novela sentimental* (Princeton, 1990); Deborah S. Greenhut, *Feminine Rhetorical Culture: Tudor Adaptations of Ovid's Heroides* (New York, 1988); Ralph J. Hexter, *Ovid and Medieval Schooling: Studies in Medieval School Commentaries on Ovid's Ars amatoria, Epistulae ex Ponto, and Epistulae heroidum* (Munich, 1986).

[17] See Hexter, *Ovid and Medieval Schooling*, 18–19 and 19 n.15; E. M. Sanford, "The Use of Classical Authors in the Libri Manuales," *Transactions of the American Philological Association* 55 (1924): 190–248. For the reception of Ovid's works in medieval England, see K. McKinley, "Manuscripts of Ovid in England 1100–1500" *English Manuscript Studies 1100–1700* 7 (1998), 41–85. In every century between 1100–1500, recorded copies of the *Metamorphoses* double those of the *Heroides* in England (80, Table 1).

genre used in the *Heroides* necessitates characterization in the form of "disembodied voices," in which rhetoric and narrative form necessarily predominate. Although, as Peter Knox states, "there are few readers of the *Heroides* who would now accept at face value the old view of these poems as versified rhetorical set pieces,"[18] I will be analyzing the heroines of the *Metamorphoses* since there Ovid's efforts to develop feminine subjectivity require both the rhetoric of their elaborate interior monologues and the more flesh-and-blood aspects of characterization (actions and physical responses). Ovid's accomplishment in his representation of the feminine, however, is a problematic one for many modern readers; while he legitimized the representation of a character's profound inner conflicts, he also, unwittingly or not, contributed to traditions linking the feminine to the emotional. Ovid's astute portrayals of the multiple, and complicated, emotional states of his female characters are indeed a rich heirloom for medieval poets; and yet, as I hope to show, the very nature of Ovid's contribution on this score is complex and at times troubling, both a blessing and a curse.

Although this study does not aim to discuss the representation of the feminine throughout Ovid's oeuvre, nor is there space here to do justice to the problematic depictions of gender in the *Ars Amatoria* and the *Heroides*, I wish to address the *Ars* briefly at this point. Scholars in the fields of classics and medieval studies alike regularly cite the *Ars* as evidence of Ovid's misogyny; excerpts from it are included under the heading "The Roots of Antifeminist Tradition" in Alcuin Blamires' anthology, *Woman Defamed and Woman Defended*. Several examples from the *Ars* will suffice here: in Book 3, where Ovid counsels women in the arts of seduction, he observes that "Pleasure gotten in safety is less approved"—that it will aid matters if her beloved believes the watchful husband is not too far away (*Ars* III.602), that fear must alternate with safer pleasures (609). In the *Ars* women are also counseled to manipulate: to pretend to be angry over rivals and to use tears where necessary (3.677). Besides perpetuating long-time associations of the feminine with deception, wiles, and false speech, the *Ars* also conveys the misogynist assumption that women enjoy forced sexual encounters (1.485–86). Attention has also been directed in recent studies to the problematic portrayals of rape

[18] Peter Knox, ed., *Heroides. Select Epistles* (Cambridge, 1995), 15.

in Ovid, including in the *Metamorphoses*.[19] These are difficult issues, and there is no point in denying the problems which they present. I cannot address them in the present study in a manner that would do them justice; yet I can offer some limited comments here. Some of the material in the *Ars* is clearly pejorative and degrading to women; yet as Blamires points out, men are also advised in this work to employ deception to obtain and keep their lovers. Further complicating matters is the pervasive irony in the *Ars*; as Blamires puts it, "since Ovid's archness makes one suspect ironies at every turn, the extent of antifeminist insinuation in his poetry remains hard to gauge."[20] A further consideration has to do with Ovid's larger project with this seduction manual. Although classicists are divided on the question, some scholars argue that Ovid wrote the treatise as a means of provoking Augustus, with his campaign of new, rigid marriage laws designed to legislate morality.[21] If the work is read in that light, Ovid appears to use the representations of the sexes in the *Ars* to challenge Augustus' moral regime, and the work takes on political ramifications which cause one to read it, and its sexual situations, quite differently. This is not to exonerate Ovid, however; even taking this possible (and I think likely) political motivation into account, I am still troubled by the representation of gender in the *Ars*. It should be noted also that medieval readers of the *Ars* did not, and perhaps could not, read it as a work of dissent. However, too often modern scholars equate medieval Ovidian discourse with the *Ars Amatoria*, which though influential, was not necessarily more widely read than the *Metamorphoses*.[22] As will be true with the clerical commentators from 1100 up through the early seventeenth century, and as is true with each of us today as readers, one is forced to recognize certain "habits of thought" which operate in Ovid and other

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[19] Amy Richlin, "Reading Ovid's Rapes," *Pornography and Representation in Greece and Rome* (New York, 1992), 158–79.

[20] Alcuin Blamires, ed., *Woman Defamed and Woman Defended* (Oxford, 1992), 17.

[21] See A. R. Sharrock, "Ovid and the Politics of Reading," *Materiali e discussioni per l'analisi dei testi classici* 33 (1994): 97–122; Alessandro Barchiesi, *The Poet and the Prince: Ovid and Augustan Discourse* (Berkeley, 1997), a study which focuses on Ovid's negotiations with Augustus' authority, and moral regime, throughout the *Fasti*; Niall Rudd, "History: Ovid and the Augustan Myth," chapter one of *Lines of Enquiry* (Cambridge, 1976), 1–31.

[22] In medieval England, between 1100 and 1500, copies of the *Metamorphoses* outnumber those of the *Ars Amatoria* by two or three to one in every century; see McKinley, "Manuscripts of Ovid in England 1100–1500," 41–85.

authors with respect to gender. The expression "habits of thought" is not used here to exonerate Ovid, to argue that all forms of misogyny in his works, however subtle, are not conscious; but rather to suggest that within one poet (as within any of his later commentators) contradictory perspectives can function, even flourish. Once this is granted, it is possible to examine his work for the range of views he manifests in his construction of the feminine. It is not my view that misogynist passages in Ovid (such as those in the *Ars*) effectively and neatly cancel out other passages which show respect toward, and/or open-minded consideration of, the feminine; nor vice versa. Rather, I wish to focus more attention on the latter in this study, since the former have received more of the scholarly spotlight recently. Perhaps when we have considered a broader range of Ovid's representations of the feminine, we will be more able to assess his complex, and sometimes contradictory, contributions in this area.

In writing this study, I have been influenced by feminist and new historicist schools of thought but have also found it necessary to depart from some of the theoretical positions they have sometimes formulated, specifically "either/or" approaches. In considering the way Ovid and particularly his later readers read the feminine, for example, I have not found the "praise or blame" (Mary/Eve) hermeneutic[23] to be adequate to represent the full diversity of readings they represent, although *at times* this hermeneutic is evident. Neither have I found it useful to consider the Ovidian heroine in her classical or later form as either conforming to patriarchal ideology *or* willfully resisting it; although an Ovidian heroine may clearly illustrate one of these positions, it is reductive to argue that all Ovidian heroines are portrayed only in one of two ways, or that commentators read them only as such. I wish to address the inadequate, reductive set of oppositions (Eve/Mary; vice/virtue) through which we have been taught to read medieval and early modern clerical discourse on the feminine. These commentators may well employ the binary approach to the feminine *at times* (as documented in the chapters which follow), but they also present a range of other, nonmoralizing readings, which fall outside of this opposition.

[23] This approach to reading the feminine in clerical texts is not a product of feminist theory; it has long been a staple of twentieth-century criticism and (traditional) historicism on medieval works.

My approaches to historical and cultural contexts in this study also require some comment. In discussing what Ovid's medieval and early modern readers have to say about his heroines, I am constructing in some way a reception study; yet because the chronological parameters are broad (ancient Rome; twelfth through early seventeenth centuries), it is not possible to historicize each commentator's work fully. This is not feasible mainly because I am dealing here not with one history, but rather multiple histories and cultures in England and western Europe. I therefore provide some cultural, historical, and pedagogical contexts which may shed light on the commentator's readings. However, when doing so, I have also found it useful and necessary to avoid the "containment/resistance" opposition articulated at times in some new historicist writing. I do not argue, for example, that these commentators are *either* using strategies of containment vis-à-vis the feminine (and thus preserving the patriarchal system) *or* presenting opposition to them. Although a commentator *may* do one of the above, I wish to show that in many cases, he was quite capable of thinking and writing in other ways about the feminine, ways not limited to control or opposition. Louis Montrose comments on the limitations of the "containment/resistance" approach in new historicism:

> I am concerned that the terms in which the problem of ideology has been posed and is now circulating in Renaissance literary studies—namely as an opposition between "containment" and "subversion"—are so reductive, polarized, and undynamic as to be of little or no conceptual value. A closed and static, singular and homogeneous notion of ideology must be succeeded by one that is heterogeneous and unstable, permeable and processual. It must be emphasized that an ideological dominance is qualified by the specific conjunctures of professional, class, and personal interests of individual cultural producers (such as poets and playwrights); by the specific though multiple social positionalities of the spectators, auditors, and readers who variously consume cultural productions; and by the relative autonomy—the specific properties, possibilities, and limitations—of the cultural medium being worked.[24]

[24] Louis Montrose, "Professing the Renaissance: the Poetics and Politics of Culture," *The New Historicism*, ed. H. Aram Veeser (New York, 1989), 22. In the 1990's medieval studies also witnessed the application of this type of new historicism in literary studies. Montrose's essay was written in 1989, but his concern still has relevance.

Montrose, like Deborah Parker in her analysis of late medieval and early modern Dante commentaries,[25] considers "the text's status as a discourse produced and appropriated within history and within a history of other productions and appropriations"—what he refers to elsewhere as the "histories"[26] to be considered in engaging any literary work. Because Ovid was read in the medieval and early modern classroom, the school itself, as a site which mediates cultural authority, is a central focus in this study. To the list of other cultural elements influencing a text I would add cultural memory, or memory traces,[27] since these are also in full evidence in medieval commentaries on Ovid, as commentators draw on and/or rework inherited readings.

In Chapter 1 Ovid's own depiction of female characters' psychological states is placed within its cultural context as a characteristic of classical "neoteric" poetry. The classical constructions and representations of the feminine come under scrutiny here, as well. The impassioned, witty, anguished discourse particular to Ovid's heroines finds its roots in a range of established classical traditions, from the dramatic monologues of Euripides' heroines to ancient medical theory on female physiology. Here I examine the problem of the Ovidian "female" voice and the extent to which it manifests subjectivity. In the following chapter, I consider examples of several Ovidian heroines from the *Metamorphoses* itself. Book 7's portrayal of Medea's inner quandary over Jason incorporates the neoteric trademark of clustering mythological allusion to convey, beyond the traditional heroine's monologue, psychological interiority. Receiving central focus in this chapter is Book 10, in which Orpheus provides a mini-*Metamorphoses* tailored to his own concerns: loss in love. Book 10 provides many illustrations of the Ovidian "female" inner landscape. The stories of Pygmalion, Myrrha, and Atalanta all illustrate in varying ways the ambivalent nature of Ovid's contribution in the depiction of female subjectivity: Pygmalion's sculpture embodies Pygmalion's own construction of ideal feminine beauty; as sculptor he gives her form, life, and identity. In the Myrrha/Cinyras story Ovid investigates the taboo of

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[25] Deborah Parker, *Commentary and Ideology: Dante in the Renaissance* (Durham, 1995).

[26] Montrose, "Professing the Renaissance," 20, 22.

[27] See Mary Carruthers, *The Book of Memory: A Study of Memory in Medieval Culture* (Cambridge, 1990).

incestuous desire, rendering Myrrha's torment powerfully after the model of Euripides' Phaedra. Atalanta, for her part, offers a striking instance of feminine independence in Ovid; her inner monologue captures the dilemma of a king's daughter caught between the fated marriage the gods have predicted for her and her desire to risk the fulfillment of that prophecy through her love for Hippomenes. Close analysis of these episodes, and of their classical precedents (however unavailable to Ovid's later readers), is purposely provided here so that the contrast between Ovid's own culture and that of medieval and early modern commentators may be presented in greater relief.

Providing a transition from antiquity to the high Middle Ages, Chapter 3 presents a survey of some of the earlier medieval commentaries on Books 7 and 10 of the *Metamorphoses*. Here I analyze a series of commentaries from Fulgentius to the early fourteenth century with an eye to commentators' treatment of the feminine. The "Ovid" of the Middle Ages and the Renaissance was unarguably a construction, indeed a site which was constructed and reconstructed, from one commentary to the next (see Frontispiece).[28] Much excellent scholarship has been done on the medieval allegorical commentary tradition, both on classical works in general, and specifically on Ovid. Yet insufficient attention has been paid to the variety of ways in which gender is treated in these commentaries. In John of Garland and the *Ovide moralisé* there is the clerical polarizing of the feminine, the "Bride of Christ/Devil's Gateway" dichotomy; in some passages the *Ovide moralisé* even adjusts Ovid's plot so as to style Myrrha as monstrous heroine but to sanitize Cinyras, for example. Giovanni del Virgilio provides an emphasis on the erotic perhaps unrivaled in the commentary tradition on Ovid's poem; yet in composing his own verse, he finds occasion to draw on the Ovidian heroine's discourse. Close examination of these early commentaries, most of which were written in France, reveals a striking interest in Ovid's penchant for the psychological in the thirteenth-century

[28] This type of illustration was frequently used in a somewhat generic fashion in early printed editions: the classical author (whose name would be inserted) was surrounded by a host of later commentators. I appreciate the assistance of John Goldfinch of the Rare Books Reading Room of the British Library on this point. If the illustration does not inform us in particular about early modern commentary traditions on Ovid, it does attest to classical commentary-as-industry in the period, and its concomitant "authorizing" of the classical *auctor* for the reader.

"Vulgate" edition of the *Metamorphoses.* This Latin edition and commentary, which acquired an extensive readership over two centuries, offers scrutiny of heroines' inner quandaries. Indeed, the textual legacy of the "Vulgate" was such that the Italian humanist Raphael Regius appears to have drawn on its text and commentary for his 1493 edition of the *Metamorphoses*, what would itself become the most popular early modern edition of the poem.

Chapter 4 examines a range of later medieval and early modern readings of Ovid's treatment of gender in the *Metamorphoses*, offering a rich complement of perspectives with which Ovid's heroines were received. Pierre Bersuire, writing only decades after Giovanni, can find opportunity to remark upon Ovid's skill in depicting psychological anguish; on the whole, however, his emphasis is the provision of exegetical readings of the *Metamorphoses*' myths in a type of handbook for preachers. At St. Albans monastery in the early fifteenth century, Thomas Walsingham draws heavily from Bersuire in his own rendering of the *Metamorphoses*, yet Walsingham shows a determination to incorporate large sections of dialogue from the *Metamorphoses*' more dramatic scenes. Walsingham, in his own summary, manifests a marked disinterest in the moralizing readings which characterize Bersuire. In 1493 Raphael Regius publishes his Latin edition of and commentary on the *Metamorphoses*, the edition that will soon become the standard text of the poem in the sixteenth century. Regius' edition is important for the changes it reflects in the ways that classical and other literary texts were beginning to be read: Regius, even more than Walsingham, consistently opts for a historical or rhetorical reading of Ovid's myths. As for Regius' treatment of the feminine, he employs Ovid's poem for its utility in teaching rhetoric; thus he finds the Ovidian heroine's monologue an ideal locus for the illustration of Ovid's rhetorical expertise. Regius also reflects the conflicts inherent in the humanist project: he will praise Ovid for his skill in depicting the heroine's dilemmas, but at times he turns a blind eye to ironies Ovid incorporates into related passages, even ironies that his heroines themselves address in their monologues. The Jesuit Jacob Pontanus in 1618 constructed an edition of the *Metamorphoses* which approaches a Renaissance commonplace book. In it, unlike in Regius' edition in which Ovid's full text is provided, Pontanus censors numerous passages containing explicit sexual material or emphasis upon the heroine's turmoil. The "Metamorphoses" which results ironically foregrounds the external actions and deeds

of epic which Ovid himself often sought to subordinate to the more pressing concerns of conscience and psyche. As I will show, this early seventeenth-century edition of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* manifests contemporary cultural anxieties in its suppression of female voices. And yet, Pontanus perhaps better than any other commentator reveals how contradictory and complex is the "clerical project" in its assessment of the classical heroine; Pontanus often participates in medieval and early modern "habits of thought" in his antifeminist readings of, and silencing of, the feminine, but he also manifests other hermeneutic approaches elsewhere by giving due attention to the psychological quandaries Ovid explores through the feminine subject, particularly in the case of Atalanta.

In sum, commentators' readings of the Ovidian heroine from the twelfth through early seventeenth centuries paradoxically show, rather than an increasing scholarly accuracy and objectivity in the treatment of psychological and sexual material, a rich and complex diversity. What the thirteenth-century "Vulgate" can provide in the way of an authoritative Latin edition with unapologetic attention to Ovid's depiction of interiority, is at times silenced in the seventeenth-century bowdlerized version of Ovid's poem; Pontanus' edition shows the effects of the Counter-Reformation in its "readings" of (or excisions from) this pagan poet. In the fourteenth century, Giovanni del Virgilio's penchant for erotic readings of the *Metamorphoses* finds a parallel in the sanitizing, yet at times voyeuristic, contemporary versions of the *Ovide moralisé.* It is not that, from the twelfth through seventeenth centuries, there is an outright decline in these commentators' recognition of Ovid's emphasis on the feminine and the psychological; but neither are there, as is sometimes imagined, a progressive objectivity and impartiality toward these matters (one of the lingering myths about the development of humanism in the late medieval and early modern periods). Indeed, seventeenth-century readings of Ovid's heroines are as culturally-determined as those of Arnulf. In many instances, however, these readers of Ovid (largely clerical) offer a range of readings of the feminine, rather than (as is commonly supposed) falling into a somewhat automatic praise or blame hermeneutic.

The *Metamorphoses*, then, offered to medieval and early modern readers a myriad of possibilities for the representation of female interiority and subjectivity. In its middle books it, like no other classical model, offers close scrutiny of the psychological states of many

different heroines. Ovid's accomplishments in this area leave their reverberations in the psychological terrain of high and later medieval love narratives. His rigorous exploration of a variety of heroines' psychological and emotional struggles, and his provision of a specific discourse for their passion, make an extremely important contribution to the representation of subjectivity in western narrative literature. Ovid's medieval and early modern readers show different degrees of willingness to recognize, and capitalize upon, his marked interest in representing the complex forms of this inner landscape.

CHAPTER ONE

THE OVIDIAN HEROINE IN CONTEXT: CLASSICAL REPRESENTATIONS OF FEMININE DISCOURSE

Ovid's poetry was so widely read, translated, and disseminated throughout the Middle Ages and early modern period that it surfaced repeatedly not only in libraries and classrooms but also, perhaps especially, in the poetry of these periods. Yet Ovid offered far more to his literary heirs than an ironic manual on the arts of love and a mythological handbook—the conventional wisdom on Ovid's legacy; instead, one of his most important contributions was his reshaping of the dimensions of psychological narrative, his explorations of the individual psyche. Too often criticism has oversimplified the nature of "Ovidian poetry": Ovid appears most often as the verbal trickster, the witty *praeceptor amoris*, the linguistic craftsman finally done in by his own rhetoric, his own art.[1] Too frequently the medieval "Ovid" is equated with his amatory verse, when in fact surviving manuscript evidence suggests that for England at least, readers in the Middle Ages were more familiar with the *Metamorphoses*.[2] Owing to the *Metamorphoses'* plethora of myths and its collective nature, it has too often been relegated to a "storehouse" status: it exists as a mythological handbook first for the medieval or Renaissance poet to ransack for narrative material, and then for the modern scholar, in almost detective-like fashion, to track individual Ovidian myths as they were refashioned by poets, as if this were the extent of the *Metamorphoses'* influence on medieval poetic narrative. Ultimately, then, the *Metamorphoses* becomes nothing more than an almost infinite series of trees; and the forest itself vanishes. Yet in both the *Heroides*

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[1] See Calabrese, *Chaucer's Ovidian Arts of Love* (Gainesville, 1994).

[2] Between 1100 and 1500, numbers of surviving or recorded copies of the *Metamorphoses* in England double (and often triple) those of Ovid's amatory works. See McKinley, "Manuscripts of Ovid in England 1100–1500," 41–85. Taking the *Ars Amatoria* as an example, the figures are as follows: s. xii: *Ars Amatoria*, 1; *Metamorphoses*, 4; s. xiii: *Ars*, 3; *Metamorphoses*, 5; s. xiv: *Ars*, 2; *Metamorphoses*, 8; s. xv: *Ars*, 5; *Metamorphoses*, 10 (Table 1).

and the *Metamorphoses*, Ovid is at work to showcase a series of heroines in a range of complex situations. Before examining his innovations in these areas within the *Metamorphoses*, it is important to situate the poem itself within its larger traditions.

While the *Metamorphoses* consistently (almost perversely) resists any type of categorical analysis and seems to yield most to the critic willing to abandon many of the critical assumptions one might expect to apply to a classical[3] poem of epic proportions, there are some distinctive characteristics of Ovid's poem which do emerge. Such features include the choice of cyclic narrative, mixing of genres and placement of tales,[4] and the development of the female psychological landscape. Many of these trademarks of Ovid's poem can be traced to the classical traditions within which he chose to work: those of Callimachus and the "neoteric" poets. Callimachus' *Aetia*, a loosely-connected series of tales on the causes (*aetia*) of things, seems to have provided a model for Ovid's *Metamorphoses*.[5] The *Aetia* has a clearly-demarcated opening and closing, giving shape to the collection of tales, and providing at first glimpse a structural model for the *Metamorphoses*.

In Callimachus, and in Ovid, the vehicle of teller and tale at times threatens to take precedence over what is actually related, again subverting one of the standard assumptions of epic poetry: instead of character, narrator, or poet as subservient (even inspired) mouthpiece for the significant events to be related, the terms are reversed. Both Callimachus and Ovid suggest the equal or greater importance of the speaker by emphasizing the mechanics of tale-telling. As a poststructuralist might put it, their poems are as much about poetry as they are about *aetia*, myths, or metamorphoses. It is certainly not fair to say that the *Aetia* and the *Metamorphoses* are *only* (or primarily) about poetry, about highly self-conscious and self-reflexive art—

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[3] The word *classical* refers here to antique poetry in general.

[4] See Brooks Otis, *Ovid as an Epic Poet*, 2d ed. (Cambridge, 1970); Karl Galinsky, *Ovid's "Metamorphoses": An Introduction to the Basic Aspects* (Berkeley, 1975); Joseph Solodow, *The World of Ovid's "Metamorphoses"* (Chapel Hill, 1988); Peter Knox, *Ovid's "Metamorphoses" and the Traditions of Augustan Poetry* (Cambridge, 1986); Garth Edward Tissol, *The Face of Nature: Wit, Narrative, and Cosmic Origins in Ovid's Metamorphoses* (Princeton, 1997).

[5] Although many of the *Aetia*'s individual poems or tales do not survive, scholars have been able to reconstruct from existing fragments a fair portion of what they consider to be the original poem. See the edition of R. Pfeiffer, *Callimachus* (Oxford, 1949).

an object which could have been accomplished in a much shorter space. Instead, both works are pioneering in their time for the way in which they raise such concerns to a level equal to that of the many other themes and interests composing the narrative. In this way narrative is cyclic in the largest possible sense, as it reflects on itself. R. O. A. M. Lyne has emphasized the delight both authors took in the aesthetics of narrative, above and beyond any moral or didactic interest.[6] Again, it should be noted here that although Callimachus' poem *Hecale* was popular through the thirteenth century, the availability of the *Aetia* to the poets of the later Middle Ages would have been extremely limited, if possible at all.[7] However, it is important to situate the unorthodox poetic of the *Metamorphoses* within its poetic lineage. Ovid's narrative innovations in the *Metamorphoses* are striking in contrast to the much more traditional form of the *Aeneid*, but he was drawing on already existing models of cyclic narrative. Many characteristics of cyclic narrative, from ring-composition to the continuum of new speakers and tales even to the emphasis upon tale-telling, may be seen in Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. Ovid's choice to foreground the teller and tale provided him with multiple opportunities to explore the psychological quandaries of many of the poem's heroines, whose monologues reveal the conflicting loyalties tormenting them.

Many of the features of Ovid's poetry also have parallels with the *neoteroi*, Roman poets of his day who consciously imitated Alexandrian poets such as Callimachus, rejecting Roman poetic norms. In a letter to Atticus (7.2), Cicero uses the Greek word *neoteroi* as a derogatory term to describe these poets; he considered their verse excessively mannered and affected.[8] Although the precise characteristics of this school of poets—if there can even be said to be a school in the formal sense—remain a subject of debate among classicists, Lyne has isolated some features which are representative: a personal and subjective emphasis, often including the heroine's lament; elaborate digression or *ecphrasis*; exquisiteness of style; abundance of mythological

[6] R. O. A. M. Lyne, "Ovid, Callimachus, and *l'art pour l'art*," *Materiali e Discussioni per l'Annalisi dei Testi Classici* 12 (1984), 24, 28.

[7] See further *Aetia, Iambi, Lyric poems, Hecale, minor epic and elegiac poems, and other fragments*, ed. C. A. Trypanis (Cambridge, 1975).

[8] R. O. A. M. Lyne, "The Neoteric Poets," *Classical Quarterly*, n.s., 21 (1978): 168; Cicero, *Letters to Atticus*, trans. and ed. D. R. Shackleton Bailey (Cambridge, 1968), 3, no. 125: 7.2.

allusion; portrayal of abnormal sexual relations; the revolutionary's "Us-Them" attitude toward the conventional *epos* (epic), manifested in "contrived unorthodoxy."[9] One of the genres which characterized the Alexandrian school of poetry was the *epyllion*, which contained the extended digression often depicting the heroine's psychological turmoil. As Lyne has observed, Catullus and others found the inserted mythological digression, *ecphrasis*, or story-within-a-story, an ideal way to destabilize the larger narrative, and to throw into question which is indeed the main narrative. Although the question of the *Metamorphoses'* genre will probably never be settled conclusively, the poem contains a number of such *epyllia*, and it seems clear that Ovid was consciously borrowing from Alexandrian poets famous for such poetry. Marjorie Crump has shown the multiplicity of *epyllia* in the poem, complete with digressions in many cases.[10] The rich interiority with which Ovid endows the female characters of the middle books of the *Metamorphoses*, particularly through his development of interior debate or monologue, is a clear signal of *epyllion* tradition: the speeches of Medea (book 7), Scylla (book 8), Byblis (book 9), and Myrrha and Atalanta (book 10) offer prime examples. In these debates the full range of the heroine's emotions is brought to the surface, as she wrestles over conflicting loyalties to homeland and love.

In the *Metamorphoses*, we find not only a multitude of carefully-situated tales but a vast array of narrators. As they do in the *Aetia*, narrators in Ovid's poem often disembark or embark at the junctions, the transitions between stories. Ovid employs his narrators in several ways which deserve comment. First is the troublesome question of the principal narrator of the *Metamorphoses*, which critics often equate too facilely with Ovid.[11] When the voice of a passage seems

[9] Lyne, "Neoteric Poets," 170, 183.

[10] For Crump, however, the term *ecphrasis* is more elastic. While Lyne's primary example is the work of art the quilt in Catullus' poem 64 that provides the vehicle for the poet to introduce another myth and so complicate the narrative Crump uses *ecphrasis* to refer to any lengthy mythological digression imbedded within another tale. See M. Marjorie Crump, *The Epyllion from Theocritus to Ovid* (Oxford, 1931), 275-78.

[11] See, for example, Betty Rose Nagle, "Erotic Pursuit and Narrative Seduction in Ovid's *Metamorphoses*," *Ramus* 17 (1988): 32-51: "Ovid narrates most of his 'Perseid' both the events leading up to the marriage with Andromeda, and the consequent battle with the disgruntled Phineus and his followers" (45). But elsewhere ("Byblis and Myrrha: Two Incest Narratives in the *Metamorphoses*," *Classical Journal* 78 [1983]: 301 15) Nagle argues for discernible differences in voice between

at odds with its context for some reason or belongs to anyone other than a named character, the standard default is Ovid;[12] it seems preferable to say "the poem's narrator" instead, since, for example, the principal narrating voice of the *Metamorphoses* is markedly different from that of the *Ars Amatoria.* There are, then, passages in which it is difficult to distinguish between even the poem's narrator and the named character. An example of this type of narrative ambiguity is Orpheus' prooemium to the Myrrha tale in book 10. While this passage will be addressed in greater detail in the next chapter, it suffices to say that the speaker of this proem addresses an audience which is clearly composed not of the trees which have gathered to provide shade for Orpheus' song (the only audience described here), but of men and women who might be offended by the tale of father-daughter incest. Here Ovid breaks the dramatic artifice momentarily by having the poem's narrator intrude into what is on the surface Orpheus' direct discourse.

Another feature of Ovidian narrative, again indebted to Callimachus and Pindar and to the Alexandrian *epyllion* tradition, is the use of the imbedded narrator: in order to relate a series of imbedded tales, Ovid will sometimes bring in as many as four successive narrators, for what is truly labor-intensive narrative. Betty Rose Nagle has isolated several such instances of imbedded narrating, what she calls "the two 'miniature' *carmina perpetua*": 1) Ovid [the poem's narrator]: Muse: Calliope: Arethusa (bk. 5); and 2) Ovid [the poem's narrator]: Orpheus: Venus: Atalanta (bk. 10).[13] In book 10, Ovid sets up a highly complex series of voices within voices with which to render the song and, in many ways, the psyche of Orpheus himself. While Orpheus' song will be explored in much greater detail below, it is worth noting in the context of multiple narrators that the final tale-teller of the series, Venus, relates the cautionary tale of Atalanta and Hippomenes which will ultimately be ignored by her lover, Adonis, and the book will end with the goddess of love's grievous lamentations over the death of Adonis. Ovid's construction of Orpheus'

Ovid and Orpheus (303, 306). Galinsky's *Ovid's "Metamorphoses"* also collapses author and narrator: "Before Narcissus' condition becomes totally absorbing to us, Ovid, the narrator, projects himself into the story by addressing Narcissus" (57).

[12] Solodow would go so far as to argue that there is no essential difference between the narrator's and author's voice: "There is basically a single narrator throughout, who is Ovid himself" (*World of Ovid's "Metamorphoses,"* 39).

[13] Nagle, "Erotic Pursuit," 33, 35.

song is such that, no matter how many "voices" removed we are from Orpheus, the bard's song ends with a story of loss in love occasioned by heedless action much like Orpheus' own. If Ovid experiments widely in his representations of the narrator's voice, it is also possible to see him forging new, though not wholly unproblematic, ground in the voices he gives to his heroines.

Classical Literary Representations of the Female Voice

Taking his cue from the "neoteroi," Ovid presents a series of heroines in books 6–10 of the *Metamorphoses* whose psychological struggles are given full play. Drawing on the neoteric *epyllion* with its interest in the depiction of female interiority, Ovid showcased his heroines with lengthy interior monologues, foregrounding their conflicts in his recasting of the myths.[14] As I have mentioned, this contribution to classical characterization was both an advance and, in some respects, a setback for the literary representation of feminine subjectivity. Before considering Ovid's representation of the female psyche, however, it may be useful to consider the ways in which the larger classical tradition construed the feminine. Michel Foucault has observed that for the Greeks, immoderation was regularly associated with women, with the feminine: "the man of non-mastery . . . or self-indulgence . . . could be called feminine."[15] Aristotle held that the rational soul was transmitted through the semen only; that the female served as the matter upon which the male impressed form.[16] In the *Politics*, Aristotle discusses women's impaired ability to deliberate:

> . . . For the free rules the slave, the male the female, and the man the child in a different way. And all possess the various parts of the soul, but possess them in different ways; for the slave has not got the deliberative part [*bouleutikon*] at all, and the female has it, but it is without full authority [*akuros*], while the child has it, but in an undeveloped form. Hence the ruler must posses intellectual virtue in completeness . . . while each of the other parties must have that share of this virtue which is appropriate to them.[17]

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[14] See Florence Verducci, *Ovid's Toyshop of the Heart* (Princeton, 1985).

[15] Michel Foucault, *History of Sexuality* (New York, 1985), 2:84–85.

[16] Aristotle, *On the Generation of Animals*, trans. A. L. Peck (Cambridge, 1963), 731a–32a, 736a.

[17] Aristotle, *Politics* 1260a 9–18, trans. H. Rackham (Cambridge, 1950); see fur-

Maryanne Horowitz discusses how in Aristotle the word *akuros* (without authority) had a range of meanings, including "fraudulent" or "invalid" in reference to legal contracts.[18] Horowitz further argues, on the basis of other evidence in Aristotle's *Politics* and *Nicomachean Ethics*, that in his view, "the ruler needs practical wisdom; the ruled need only true opinion."[19] In western Europe in the Middle Ages and Renaissance, as I will discuss in subsequent chapters, the view of women's inferior intellectual capacity was a commonplace; this Aristotelian principle was mediated through a host of later writers up to the Renaissance, when a great number of his works were recovered and edited.

Even centuries after Ovid's time, Plutarch conveys the Aristotelian view of the feminine: in his advice to newlyweds, Plutarch takes up Aristotle's idea that in conception, the male creates an idea in the woman's uterus. Woman stands in need of man's rational principle, Plutarch says, and her intellect, when unassisted and undisciplined, is susceptible to "misshapen," abnormal growths:

> It is said that no woman ever produced a child without the co-operation of a man, yet there are misshapen, fleshlike, uterine growths originating in some inflection, which develop of themselves and acquire firmness and solidity, and are commonly called "moles." Great care must be taken that this sort of thing does not take place in women's minds. For if they do not receive the seed of good doctrine and share with their husbands in intellectual advances, they, left to themselves, conceive many untoward ideas and low designs and emotions.[20]

Such assumptions equating man with the rational and woman with the emotional are ubiquitous up through the fourteenth century, as well. Two medieval commentators' responses to Ovid's exile poetry, poems lamenting his intense suffering in his banishment on the island of Tomis, offer a provocative illustration here. Petrarch can dismiss Ovid's behavior before and after his banishment as "unmanly" observing, "[Ovid] seems to me to have been a man of immense genius,

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ther Maryanne Cline Horowitz, "Aristotle and Woman," *Journal of the History of Biology* 9 (1976), 207.

[18] Horowitz, "Aristotle and Woman," 207.

[19] Ibid.

[20] Plutarch, *Moralia*, trans. Frank Cole Babbitt (Cambridge, 1927–76), 48.145e. See further Thomas Laqueur, *Making Sex: Body and Gender from the Greeks to Freud* (Cambridge, 1990), 42.

but he had a mind [that was] libidinous and unstable, in short, womanly."[21] Petrarch and Boccaccio both attributed Ovid's love poetry to the Roman poet's "female weakness."[22] While Ovid in his exile poetry may be, as so often, adopting a rhetorical pose, both commentators reveal their assumptions regarding gender through their word choice. Their objections to the excessive nature of Ovid's laments (whether his own or a fictitious persona's) highlight a problem also true of the classical heroine's monologues: no matter how valid the speaker's objections to and appraisal of her predicament, she can voice her thoughts through the only developed discourse sanctioned for female characters in classical literature: the language and rhetoric of emotional excess. To the classical sense of decorum, such excess was an anathema, yet it had a place of sorts within classical rhetoric. Zeitlin comments on the Greek tradition of linking the feminine with the irrational, the emotional:

> There is nothing new in stressing the associations of Dionysos and the feminine for the Greek theater. After all, madness, the irrational, and the emotional aspects of life are associated in the culture more with women than with men. The boundaries of women's bodies are perceived as more fluid, more permeable, more open to affect and entry from the outside, less easily controlled by intellectual and rational means. This perceived physical and cultural instability renders women weaker than men; it is also the more a source of disturbing power over men, as reflected in the fact that in the divine world it is feminine agents for the most part (in addition to Dionysos) who inflict men with madness: Hera, Aphrodite, the Erinyes, or even Athena as in Sophocles' *Ajax*.[23]

We can also look to tragedy as an important influence in Ovid's construction of the heroine's rhetoric. Many of the female characters' speeches in books 6–10 of the *Metamorphoses* appear to have been modelled on the impassioned speeches of heroines from classical tragedy, particularly Euripides.[24] Charles Segal observes that Greek tragedy regularly perpetuated gendered assumptions about

[21] Quoted in Calabrese, *Chaucer's Ovidian Arts of Love*, 23. Calabrese quotes Ralph J. Hexter, *Ovid and Medieval Schooling*, 96. Petrarch, *De vita solitaria* 2.7.2: "Ille mihi quidem magni vir ingenii videtur, sed lascivi et lubrici et prorus mulierosi animi fuisse." Hexter (96 n. 56) cites Francisci Petrarchae . . . *Opera* (Basel, 1581).

[22] Calabrese, *Chaucer's Ovidian Arts of Love*, 23–24.

[23] Zietlin, *Playing the Other*, 343 44.

[24] Solodow, *World of Ovid's "Metamorphoses,"* 18–25.

women: "tragedy's almost obsessive embodiment of danger and destruction in female characters shows that these situations of male-female conflict did preoccupy the Athenians."[25] He also investigates ancient Athenian social custom, specifically, the arrangement of the household, as it helps shape male and female discourse. The Greek house is divided into two parts: "in the one there is rowdy feasting and singing, in the other silence and lamentation. . . . Male-centered values are associated with questions of what is shameful, noble, proper, and honorable; the 'house' values are associated with the emotional gestures of lamenting and weeping."[26] Woman's role in ancient public lamentation is well-established; this too contributes both to the perception of woman as more inclined to the passions and also to the depiction of her as such in drama and poetry; it further endows her with a type of discourse reserved for situations of intense emotion.[27] For Segal indeed the language of Euripidean tragedy reveals "gender-defined polarities" such that "women's speech . . . vacillates dangerously between the language of ambiguous erotic signs, on the one hand . . . and a bestial language, on the other."[28] In Senecan tragedy, the case is not much different, according to Diana Robin: "the female voice in Senecan drama is regularly the site of hysteria and paranoia."[29] If Segal's and Robin's assessments perhaps overstate the case, the linking of the female with emotional excess can be witnessed in ancient medical theory, which postulated that women's reproductive organs were "generative of emotional illness," including, often, hysteria.[30] When Ovid looked to Euripides and Seneca, then, in his construction of speeches for his distraught heroines, he borrowed a discourse already heavily dependent on gendered assumptions and informed by social custom.

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[25] Charles Segal, *Euripides and the Poetics of Sorrow: Art, Gender, and Communication in "Alcestis," "Hippolytus," and "Hecuba"* (Durham, 1993), 8.

[26] Segal, *Euripides and the Poetics of Sorrow*, 73, 74. See also Froma I. Zeitlin, "Playing the Other: Theater, Theatricality, and the Feminine in Greek Drama," *Representations* 11 (1985): 72–73.

[27] See Gail Holst-Warhaft, *Dangerous Voices: Women's Laments and Greek Literature* (London, 1992), 29–35.

[28] Segal, *Euripides and the Poetics of Sorrow*, 98.

[29] Diana Robin, "Film Theory and the Gendered Voice in Seneca," *Feminist Theory and the Classics*, ed. Nancy Sorkin Rabinowitz and Amy Richlin (New York, 1993), 107.

[30] Ibid., 107, 108; see also, generally, Laqueur, *Making Sex*.

Yet Zeitlin offers an alternate view on Greek tragedy which sheds provocative light on Ovid's heroines and their self-interrogation: she emphasizes the component of "self-searching" central to the representation of the character on the ancient Greek stage.[31] She observes that "the performed self is a self under pressure, always at risk. It has a set of vested interests to which the character would remain 'true,' and during the course of the play it will experience certain disclosures and recognitions, both small and great."[32] Finally, she points to the distinctive features of the drama of Euripides: "his greater interest in and skill at subtly portraying the psychology of female characters and his general emphasis on interior states of mind as well as on the private emotional life of the individual, most often located in the feminine situation."[33] Albrecht Dihle discusses the powerful legacy Euripides would thus create with his focus on the feminine: "The fact . . . that this potential for increasing the psychological depth of stage events was first attempted with female characters—a process that has parallels in comedy . . .—was to make this achievement one of immense significance for the later dramatic tradition of Europe."[34]

Other classical rhetorical models may also have influenced Ovid in his development of the heroine's discourse. It has long been a commonplace in Ovid studies that Ovid himself preferred the *suasoriae* as a rhetorical mode; Seneca remarked of Ovid's own declamations in school, that he would perform only the "ones involving portrayal of a character (*non nisi ethicas*)."[35] *Ethopoeia* was also a rhetorical exercise used in the schools; here the student would recreate in a monologue the tensions facing a hero or heroine at a moment of crisis. Peter Knox also points to the classical elegy tradition as a strong influence: some Greek elegies take the form of a monologue on the conflicts of love.[36] Taken together, there was a rich complement of rhetorical traditions familiar to and favored by Ovid, from which he constructed the heroines' laments so frequent in the middle books of the *Metamorphoses*. In all of these traditions, one can see

[31] Zeitlin, *Playing the Other*, 290–91.
[32] Ibid., 291.
[33] Ibid., 364–65.
[34] Albrecht Dihle, *A History of Greek Literature from Homer to the Hellenistic Period*, trans. Clare Krojzl (London, 1994), 126.
[35] Knox, ed., Ovid, *Heroides. Select Epistles* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 15; Seneca, *Controversiae* 2.2.8.
[36] Knox, ed., *Heroides*, 16–17.

the Greek exploration of the self and its various formations, as described by Alvin Gouldner:

> The nature of the self, one's own as well as that of others, is of strong and salient *interest* to the Greeks. The self has become an object to itself, and the importance attached to it is matched by a sense of ignorance concerning its character. The self is felt to contain a mystery that invites a quest "to know thyself." It is not only that the Greeks feel that they do not (but should) know themselves; they also have a nagging feeling—or a fantasy—of being other than what they seem. . . . The more precarious the sense of self, the more problematic it becomes, the more aware may one become of the difficulties of self-maintenance and of the self's varying, elusive character.[37]

What of the discourse Ovid provides his male characters? Here he falls within traditional classical conventions of characterization, providing relatively little representation of the inner landscape of the male character. In Homer, whose cast of characters is largely male, a male character rarely debates with himself at any length over personal issues (through the interior monologue), except as they are tied to military interests. This is the case indeed with nearly all classical narrative poetry. In the *Metamorphoses* we find no male characters engaged in long deliberative monologues expressing anguish over a conflict of loyalties. It is a commonplace now that many female characters in medieval literature for the most part lack an authentic voice; we might also fairly argue that, until the medieval French romance, the male character had no particular "voice" with which to express his inmost emotional concerns. The male character in much narrative classical literature has been marginalized in an important way, since his "full characterization" is one which regularly excludes his own conflicts over personal issues. The first time we see this kind of exploration of male characters' inner states is in the medieval French romance, where love is brought to the fore as a central concern of the plot, thus legitimizing (both male and female) characters' attention to its effects on them.[38] Heart-searching monologues of characters distraught by love's complications abound in such works as the *Roman d'Eneas* and many of Chrétien de Troyes' romances.

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[37] Alvin Gouldner, *Enter Plato: Classical Greece and the Origins of Social Theory* (New York: Harper, 1969), 99, 100; quoted in Zeitlin, *Playing the Other*, 291 n. 15.

[38] See Christopher Baswell's discussion of Eneas' lengthy inner debate in the *Roman d'Eneas*, in *Virgil in Medieval England: Figuring the "Aeneid" from the Twelfth Century to Chaucer* (Cambridge, 1995), 215–18.

Ovid's Heroines and Feminine Discourse

If Ovid neglects the interiority of the male character, he portrays a wide range of female characters engaged in complex emotional conflicts. Although Virgil also creates an elaborate psychological drama in the Dido episode of *Aeneid* 4, in the context of the larger poem this episode, for all of its dramatic power, does not in any final sense legitimize Dido's tragedy.[39] Book 4 is contextualized by Augustan ideology, manifested in Aeneas' obligation to turn from this moment of self-indulgence and return to his larger mission: the founding of the Roman race. Many of Ovid's heroines are caught in predicaments similar to Dido's, and it can be argued that they display some degree of agency in their characterization, debating the full range of political and emotional repercussions which will inevitably face them if they choose love over country. Leslie Cahoon maintains that in the discourse of the female characters in the *Heroides* Ovid provides a "voice" for women that answers the *Ars Amatoria*'s "books of amatory advice from an expert in oppressive love."[40] Yet Phyllis Culham argues that in Ovid's poetry "attention to women is not the same thing as respect."[41] The very mythology and literary tradition which Ovid inherited was one which often constructed the female character for whom emotional concerns, time and again, overrode rational ones. Lyne has characterized the neoteric, or "Callimachean" tradition that so influenced Ovid, and its eventual emphasis on the distraught or obsessed heroine:

> The Callimachean poets explored the byways of myth or probed unexpected corners in well-known myths. The sex-lives of heroes were congenial. If the plots of later or more extreme Callimacheans became more erotic or more off-beat, that should not surprise us. Extremer or diverser tactics are still serving the same strategy: the cultivation of the unexpected and the unconventional, often with an eye directly on affronting conventional expectations. It could be fun, for example, to make epics with heroines instead of heroes—and monstrous heroines at that.[42]

[39] For the medieval reception of Dido, see Marilynn Desmond, *Reading Dido: Gender, Textuality, and the Medieval "Aeneid"* (Minneapolis, 1994).
[40] Leslie Cahoon, "Let the Muse Sing On: Poetry, Criticism, Feminism, and the Case of Ovid," *Helios* 17 (1990): 200.
[41] Phyllis Culham, "Decentering the Text: The Case of Ovid," *Helios* 17 (1990): 163.
[42] Lyne, "Neoteric Poets," 182.

Besides participating in the Roman neoteric tradition which featured anguished and transgressive heroines, Ovid may also have peopled his narrative with these sorts of female characters as a way of challenging Augustus' moral regime and recent marriage legislation (18 B.C.E.) in ways which Dido, another transgressive heroine, threatened to do within the different setting of the *Aeneid*.[43]

Ovid presents remarkably astute explorations of the psychological states of his female characters, as the examples of Medea, Myrrha, and Atalanta will show. From *Tristia* 3.7, it is evident that Ovid himself supported the literary efforts of the contemporary poet Perilla. He called her "most learned" (*doctissima*, line 31)[44] and records that, prior to his exile, they exchanged and critiqued each other's verse. The language Ovid uses in the elegy reflects his relation as stepfather: he refers to himself in the role of "father," "guide," and "comrade" (*pater* . . . *dux* . . . *comes*, line 18), but even with an apparent difference in age and artistic expertise, Ovid regards Perilla as a poet worthy of the greatest respect, in her own right, on her own terms.[45] Despite his support of female poets such as Perilla, however, the specific discourse he accords his heroines in the middle books of the *Metamorphoses* carries with it some problematic lineage. For all of Ovid's own psychological insight, this rhetoric owes its peculiar character to a variety of different classical traditions in which the female gender becomes the repository not only of difference, but particularly of any number of emotional and psychological excesses and aberrations. In this way Ovid's contribution to classical and, ultimately, medieval and early modern female characterization has both its advantages and its disadvantages.

Feminist theory has presented a wide range of readings of "woman's voice." Hélène Cixous and Luce Irigaray offer in different ways the

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[43] See Alison Keith, "Tandem Venit Amor: A Roman Woman Speaks of Love," in *Roman Sexualities*, ed. Judith P. Hallett and Marilyn B. Skinner (Princeton, 1997), 296–300. I quote here from the 2nd edition of the *Oxford Classical Dictionary*, s.v. "Augustus, C. Octavius," as it provides a more succinct account than does the 3rd edition: "Moral and religious reforms marked the years 18 and 17 B.C. The *lex Iulia de adulteriis* made adultery a public crime; the *lex Iulia de maritandis ordinibus* made marriage nearly compulsory and offered privileges to married people. A *lex sumptuaria* tried to reduce luxury. Members of senatorial families were forbidden to marry into families of freemen."

[44] Ovid, *Tristia*, trans. and ed. Arthur Leslie Wheeler (Cambridge, 1965).

[45] See further Judith P. Hallett, "Contextualizing the Text: The Journey to Ovid," *Helios* 17 (1990): 191–92.

problematic theory that there is a language peculiar or particular to women, a language of desire, of *eros*. Cixous, for example, describes "woman's language":

> Listen to woman speak in a gathering (if she is not painfully out of breath): she doesn't "speak," she throws her trembling body into the air, she lets herself go, she flies, she goes completely into her voice, she vitally defends the "logic" of her discourse with her body; her flesh speaks true. . . . Really she makes what she thinks materialize carnally, she conveys meaning with her body. She inscribes what she is saying because she does not deny unconscious drives the unmanageable part they play in speech.[46]

Here woman is figured almost as frenzied vatic prophetess, except that she does not function as mouthpiece for the god; instead her language is the very embodiment of her own "unconscious drives." Cixous and Clément go on to ground their theory in a survey of representations of the feminine in Western culture, ancient through modern. Irigaray also argues that there is a "specificity" in female voice, language:

> Which implies a logic other than the one imposed by discursive coherence. . . . Let us say that it would reject all closure or circularity in discourse—any constitution of *archè* or *télos*; that it would privilege the "near" rather than the "proper," but a "near" not (re)captured in the spatio-temporal economy of philosophical tradition; that it would entail a different relation to unity, to identity with self, to truth, to the same and thus to alterity, to repetition and thus to temporality. . . . Since for the feminine, the other lies in the one [*l'un(e)*]—without any possibility of equality, identity, subordination, appropriation . . . of that one in its relation to the other.[47]

Despite the apparent internal logic of Irigaray's characterization of a female discourse, other feminists, such as Julia Kristeva, have been unable to accept this sort of essentialism, or have wished to qualify it.[48] More recent feminist criticism, in the fields of classics and medieval

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[46] Hélène Cixous and Catherine Clément, *The Newly Born Woman*, trans. Betsy Wing (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1975), 92.

[47] Luce Irigaray, *This Sex Which Is Not One*, trans. Catherine Porter and Carolyn Burke (Ithaca, 1985), 153. As a somewhat maddening reflection of Irigaray's opposition to "discursive coherence," this book lacks both bibliography and index.

[48] Julia Kristeva, "Women's Time," trans. Alice Jardine and Harry Blake, *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture* 7.1 (1981): 13–35. See also Barbara K. Gold, "Finding the Female in Roman Poetry," *Feminist Theory and the Classics*, 82–87.

and early modern studies, has helpfully illuminated many problems relating to the construction of the feminine in male-authored texts in these periods. At times, however, such criticism participates in a project which can actually work against itself. Zeitlin, in a review of a recent study on Euripides, discusses a problem in certain studies focusing on the representation of the women in classical literature; some scholars

> . . . seem to me less interested in the heuristic value of gender in order to illuminate the culture they are studying—to chart the ambiguities, subversions, play of categories, and irreducible contradictions in cultural work. Instead, they stop at the anguished fact that women and their interests are continually "muted" in a system that is based on patrilineal descent and male hegemony . . . stuck as modern women are, with the texts and culture(s) they have, apologetics are needed for perpetuating canonical influence, even through strenuous strategies of resistance, as if to make the best of a bad bargain. I do not believe that this is the only mode of approach. . . . [the] single-minded focus on women's disabilities in men's eyes leads at times to very interesting observations that others have overlooked . . . at times it also leads to special pleading and some ingenious sleights of hand. But this focus also makes these plays . . . less interesting than I think they are—less complex, less ambiguous, less challenging—not just in respect to male-female relations (and the voicing again and again of the unfair disparities between them) but also regarding general social and political ideas.[49]

As she asks elsewhere in the same review, "If we find nothing but male oppression and female victimage, why indeed read [Euripides' plays]? It is one thing to take as a given that women are given by men to men in marriage in a law of exchange that reduces women, in a legal sense, to objects. It is quite another to translate this truism into a valid and always applicable explanation of acute social and psychological processes, even in dramatic texts." The type of hermeneutic which Zeitlin decries here I have also found too limiting to be useful in general in my own study of Ovid. What seems more useful in an analysis of the discourse of Ovid's heroines is Zeitlin's emphasis on the act of self-discovery or self-fashioning which is central to the dramatic monologue in tragedy.

Even closer to home, Marilyn Skinner analyzes the representations of the feminine in Catullus' poetry in illuminating ways. She

[49] Froma I. Zeitlin, review of *Anxiety Veiled: Euripides and the Traffic in Women*, by Nancy Sorkin Rabinowitz (Ithaca, 1993). *Bryn Mawr Classical Review* 94.11.03.

discusses the Roman interest in the "victim's state of mind," the tendency to take on a "synthetic 'female' sensibility" which became a "channel for imaginative escape." She characterizes the suffering, "feminine" figures in Catullus' poetry "as alternate subject positions permitting scope for emotive fantasy. Although their passions were gendered 'feminine,' a male reader was expected to discharge his own repressed feelings through sentimental involvement in the character's predicament."[50] What appears to have been a useful strategy for Catullus seems also to have been useful for Ovid. It may well be that, even while Ovid and his neoteric predecessors at times participated in traditions limiting, or even at times pejorative, to women, nevertheless for these poets the feminine was *bonne a penser*, good to think with.[51] Although it must be recognized that the heroine's lament is constructed by a male author, that consideration should not be an end of the discussion. Rather, as Zeitlin and others have shown, Euripides and Ovid were powerfully drawn to the voice and acts of the anguished heroine as a way of exploring some of the complexities, ambiguities, and contingencies of human experience. Throughout this study I am fully aware of the limits inherent in this voice; yet I see it also as a window of exploration, a way of talking and thinking about certain subjects and issues for which there was no other sanctioned form of extended discourse in classical literature. In the next chapter I will investigate more closely the ambivalent nature of the female voice with which Ovid endows the heroines of the *Metamorphoses*.

[50] Marilyn B. Skinner, "*Ego Mulier*: The Construction of Male Sexuality in Catullus," in Hallett and Skinner, *Roman Sexualities*, 145.

[51] Zeitlin, *Playing the Other*, 8; also Brown, *The Body and Society*, 153.

CHAPTER TWO

OVID'S HEROINES AND FEMININE DISCOURSE: *METAMORPHOSES* 7 AND 10

The voice of the distraught heroine, such as Myrrha or Atalanta, surfaces repeatedly in the *Metamorphoses*' middle books. Ovid indulges the neoteric taste in the representation of the woman in emotional turmoil and explores her situation in far more depth than that of any other type of female character. The female voice as such in *Metamorphoses* 6–10 is drawn from the classical traditions of elegy, dramatic monologue, and medical theory. Ovid's extensive treatment of heroines' psychological quandaries did much to legitimize the representation of subjectivity (both for female and, in the Middle Ages, for male character as well); yet the "voice" and the subjectivity accorded these heroines deserve further scrutiny. A number of passages from the *Metamorphoses* illustrate the specific nature and quality of Ovid's contributions to the representation of female interiority. Medea's flight in book 7, during which she scans the Aegean and surrounding terrain, seems one of Ovid's purely "ornamental" passages as it heaps up mythological allusions. But even in this brief passage, Ovid employs allusions to myths (Paris, Cygnus/Phyllius) to reflect the deeper concerns of the vengeful Medea and so shows medieval poets how to suggest interiority through myth above and beyond the more straightforward lover's lament or internal monologue, thus extending the limits of traditional medieval *ethopoeia*. The focal point of this chapter will be Orpheus' song in book 10, which manifests numerous hallmarks of Ovid's poetics, with its many imbedded heroines' interior monologues and its extended inset tale. This song, which constitutes the great bulk of book 10, gives the book an internal coherence virtually unrivalled elsewhere in the poem; the song's function as an extended poem-within-a-poem also repays close scrutiny, for it is here that we may gain some insight into Ovid's own program with the larger poem and with his representations of the feminine in general. The examples of Medea, Orpheus, Myrrha, and Atalanta offer a cross-section of passages which are in many

ways characteristic of Ovid's strategies in rendering male and female interiority and emotional conflict.

Book 7: Medea

The Medea tale covers roughly the first half of book 7 of the *Metamorphoses* and contains the first of the many extended interior monologues of female characters in books 6–10, as Medea struggles over whether to remain loyal to her father and homeland or to betray both by helping Jason carry out her father's orders. Ovid's tendency to model the heroines' monologues in the *Metamorphoses* on the speeches of Euripides' heroines is generally accepted; later in this chapter I will explore the many parallels between Myrrha and Euripides' Phaedra. Zeitlin comments on the heroine's monologue in Euripides:

> Woman speaks on the tragic stage, transgressing the social rules if she speaks on her own behalf... by virtue of the conflicts generated by her social position and ambiguously defined between inside and outside, interior self and exterior identity, the woman is already more of a "character" than the man, who as an actor is far more limited to his public social and political roles. Woman comes equipped with a "natural" awareness of the complexities that men would resist, if they could. Situated in her more restrictive and sedentary position in the world, she is permitted, even asked, to reflect more deeply... on the paradoxes of herself.[1]

Zeitlin goes on to argue that in tragedy mimesis is bound up with gender, that in Greek drama, "for the most part man is undone (or at times redeemed) by feminine forces or himself undergoes a type of 'feminine' experience. On the simplest level, this experience involves a shift, at the crucial moment of the peripeteia, from active to passive, from mastery over the self and others to surrender and grief... tragedy, understood as the worship of Dionysos, expands an awareness of the world and the self through the drama of 'playing the other,' whose mythic and cultic affinities with the god logically connect the god of women to the lord of the theater."[2] Ovid draws on this Euripidean exploration of the feminine, this using women "to think with," when

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[1] Zeitlin, *Playing the Other*, 362, 363.
[2] Ibid., 363–64.

he presents a succession of heroines, rather than heroes, in the central books of the *Metamorphoses*. These heroines engage in the inward interrogation and grief which Greek tragedy had relegated to the status of "other"—but an "other" essential to the male hero's psychological development and growth within the play.

First, in setting up Medea's monologue, Ovid evokes the traditional battle in the lover between *ratio* and *amor*: "luctata diu, postquam ratione furorem/vincere non poterat"[3] (having struggled long, after she could not conquer passion with reason; 7.9–11). In her monologue Medea vacillates in her arguments against and for loving Jason:

> . . . frustra, Medea, repugnas:
> nescio quis deus obstat . . . mirumque, quid hoc est,
> aut aliquid certe simile huic, quod amare vocatur.
> Nam cur iussa patris nimium mihi dura videntur?
> sunt quoque dura nimis! cur, quem modo denique vidi,
> ne pereat, timeo? quae tanti causa timoris?
> excute virgineo conceptas pectore flammas,
> si potes, infelix! si possem, sanior essem!
> sed trahit invitam nova vis, aliudque cupido,
> mens aliud suadet: video meliora proboque,
> deteriora sequor! (7.11–21)

> Medea, you battle pointlessly: some god stands in your way . . . I wonder whether this is love, or something close to it. For why do my father's orders seem excessively harsh? But they are indeed! Why am I afraid that someone I have only just seen will die? Why do I have so much fear? Shake off from your virgin breast these kindled flames—if you can—unfortunate one. If I could, I would be more rational. But a strange force pulls me unwillingly: love urges one thing, reason another. I see and approve the better way; I follow the worse!

In the final half of her lament, Ovid shows Medea at work to justify her love for Jason, despite the range of doubts she expresses about helping him:

> nempe pater saevus, nempe est mea barbara tellus,
> frater adhuc infans; stant mecum vota sororis,
> maximus intra me deus est. non magna relinquam,
> magna sequar: titulum servatae pubis Achivae
> notitiaeque soli melioris et oppida, quorum

[3] Ovid, *P. Ovidii Nasonis Metamorphoses*, ed. William S. Anderson (Leipzig, 1988). All quotations from the *Metamorphoses* will be taken from this edition. Translations are my own, except where noted.

hic quoque fama viget, cultusque artesque locorum,
quemque ego cum rebus, quas totus possidet orbis,
Aesonidem mutasse velim, quo coniuge felix
et dis cara ferar et vertice sidera tangam. (53–61)

Surely my father is cruel, my country is uncivilized; my brother is still small, my sister's prayers are with me; the greatest god is within me! I will not leave behind great things, but follow them: I will have the title of deliverer of Greek youths, familiarity with a better country and cities, whose glory is also renowned here, civilization and the arts, and the one whom I would not trade for whatever the whole earth holds, Aeson's son; as his wife I will be called fortunate, dear to the gods; my head will touch even the heavens.

Medea shows the lover's tendency toward self-delusion here, imagining the fame and prosperity that will be hers as Jason's wife in Greece. At one point in the monologue, Medea flirts with the possibility that Jason will desert her in Colchis once she has helped him; she considers "meritique oblivia nostri" (his carelessness of my help; line 45), but she quickly discounts it. Yet to Ovid's reader (ancient or modern), such a touch is surely ironic, given the well-known outcome of the Jason and Medea story. In Book 8, Ovid also has Scylla charge her beloved Minos with a similar type of forgetfulness, a failure to appreciate how her actions have in fact led to his military victory. Ovid is fully aware that in both cases, the heroine herself carries her share of the responsibility for the final tragedy. The loss of Ovid's play *Medea* is very unfortunate; however, his inclusion of this heroine in the *Heroides* and the *Metamorphoses* as well shows his considerable interest in her plight and its dramatic and rhetorical possibilities. As the opening dramatic monologue in the *Metamorphoses*, it is paradigmatic in many ways: the heroine battling over private and public loyalties. Throughout the soliloquy Medea manifests the shifts in her strong feelings; her very language illustrates Ovid's fascination with intentionality, with the character caught in a crisis, in which her own actions and choices become central. With other heroines (Byblis, Canace, and Myrrha), Ovid explores the taboo of incest; with Medea and Scylla he investigates another, less obvious, taboo: the king's daughter defying paternal authority and national loyalties to pursue a foreign prince. This potent combination of domestic and political anarchy obviously held a real fascination for Greeks and Romans. That Medea is aware of the very real—and dire—consequences of such treason, is clear throughout her monologue. What

Medea will go on to do in the name of love—killing a brother, killing Pelias, killing her own children—make her, finally, one of the most notorious *viragos* of classical tradition. But Ovid, while confirming this picture of Medea, also works to endow her with humanity, to complicate the story in new ways, reflecting some of the sympathy with which Euripides had presented her plight in his *Medea*.

Following her monologue, Ovid employs still other means to represent the troubled interior landscape of Medea; after the fashion of the *neoteroi*, in the subsequent narrative of her flight (7.350–92) he imbeds a series of mythological allusions, many of which turn in some way on the theme of revenge. Ovid's focus in the Jason and Medea story is in general psychological; altering the accounts in Apollonius and Euripides, Ovid compresses the portrayal of Medea's final atrocities, the killing of Glauce and Medea's own two sons in revenge for Jason's betrayal of her. Presumably Ovid treated Medea's situation more extensively in his tragedy *Medea*. In the *Metamorphoses* he is more interested in depicting the events leading up to and following these acts as a means of analyzing Medea's motivations and psychology. In this way Ovid seems to follow the *epyllia* of the neoteric poets, who "had the freedom to follow personal whim for [their] main emphases in subject matter."[4] There are notable differences between Ovid's Medea story and those of his predecessors: he removes Jason from the story—for all practical purposes—by the Aeson episode, he has Medea fly alone to Corinth after the brutal murder of Pelias, and he truncates the "scenes of the crime."

Judith Rosner-Siegel has demonstrated the changes which occur in Medea's character as she moves through the tale's tripartite structure of Medea/Jason, Medea/Aeson, and Medea/Pelias. If it is with the rejuvenation of Aeson that Medea can be seen as a witch retaining some vestiges of human compassion, by the Pelias episode her transformation is final.[5] While Rosner-Siegel presents a generally accurate picture of Medea's gradual transformation, she characterizes Medea's flight to Corinth as just one in a series of actions undertaken when nothing human remains in her:

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[4] R. O. A. M. Lyne, ed. *Ciris* (Cambridge, 1978), 34.

[5] Judith Rosner-Siegel, "*Amor*, Metamorphosis and Magic: Ovid's Medea, *Met.* 7:1–424," *Classical Journal* 77 (1982): 234, 241.

> From this time forward, Jason is virtually absent from the narrative, and the witch Medea, no longer human, stands in the foreground, wreaking havoc on Pelias and his kin, soaring in her chariot to the ends of the earth . . . and finally touching down again at Corinth.[6]

But this flight is one of many passages in Ovid in which a number of myths are alluded to in rapid succession and through which Ovid develops some further sense of the character's inner world. The selection and arrangement of myths in this passage suggest that we are not quite finished with Medea's human qualities yet.

While not exactly an *ecphrasis*, the flight episode serves nearly the same function here, as it introduces a pause in the narrative so as to approach a given theme (or themes) from a fresh angle. Ovid is following the regular sequence of events as Medea takes off in her dragon chariot and heads for Corinth. Yet he pauses to elaborate upon the many sights which Medea observes as she passes over the Aegean and so to introduce an assortment of myths, many of which are connected at some level to the theme of revenge. Ovid's development of the details of this flight, which is placed directly prior to the shorthand account of Medea's worst crimes, offers a lens onto Medea's personal motivations and anxieties but also onto Ovid's own expertise as *artifex*, poetic maker: here he pushes the boundaries of classical characterization beyond the traditional monologue or objective description, forging a new way to convey psychological interiority. In his clustering of myth he draws on the tradition laid by Callimachus, Catullus, and the *neoteroi*, who infused their poems with a wealth of mythological allusion to a much greater extent than did other classical poets.[7] Ovid's innovation, however, is to deploy such a heaping of myths to convey psychological states indirectly. In many ways he will attempt something similar with Orpheus' song, itself a collection of myths on loss in love which do double duty, offering us a glimpse of Orpheus' own remorse over Eurydice.

Like Rosner-Siegel, other critics are dismissive of the significance of the flight passage. William S. Anderson contends that "in this section we are not interested in Medea as a dramatic character at all. She merely serves as a vehicle for the amusing display of Ovid's erudition." Brooks Otis calls it "quite uninspired" and Rosner-Siegel

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[6] Ibid., 241.

[7] R. O. A. M. Lyne, "The Neoteric Poets," *Classical Quarterly*, n.s., 21 (1978): 182.

comments only that Medea "has wandered to those parts of the world where fantastic metamorphoses have occurred."[8] Yet a closer examination of this episode would seem to suggest that Ovid was consciously incorporating several myths which would "answer" larger concerns in the representation of Medea's character. A key element of this flight is its solitary nature; as Jason is not present, Ovid can through thematic *amplificatio* more conveniently introduce the revenge motif common to the many myths of the passage. Several myths from this episode (Paris; the Telchines; Cygnus/Phyllius; Leto) exemplify how Ovid is not only foreshadowing Medea's vendetta in a rather straightforward presentation of revenge myths but also connecting some of them with Medea's personal history. Some of the myths which form this panorama are included simply because they concern stories of flight metamorphosis (Cerambus, Combe, Eumelus); others connect the motifs of flight and revenge for jilted love (Alcidamas, Cygnus, Calaurea [Leto/Juno]). What seems clear is that Ovid interspersed myths closely connected with Medea's own concerns (magic, betrayal in love, revenge) among the more straightforward flight myths.

The dizzying route Medea covers in her aerial journey takes her clear across the Aegean to Pitane, as far south as Rhodes, back up to Thessaly's Tempe, west to Cyllene, and finally to Corinth. On this trip eighteen sites come within view, and Medea's route seems haphazard as she ricochets back and forth. Franz Bömer notes that this "baroque" section reflects Ovid's "well-known" disinterest in geography and functions to include seventeen myths which in themselves are of little interest to Ovid but need to be incorporated somewhere in the poem. Anderson either blames Medea's confused itinerary on her wayward dragons or is himself vexed by it.[9] It is true that Medea could have flown "non-stop" to Corinth and saved her dragons considerable exhaustion; hence there must be some rationale for Ovid's inclusion of myths at this point. When we consider that

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[8] William S. Anderson, ed., *Ovid's "Metamorphoses": Books 6–10* (Norman, 1972), 280 n. 350, 282 n. 357; Brooks Otis, *Ovid as an Epic Poet*, 2d ed. (Cambridge, 1970), 1, 173; Rosner-Siegel, "Amor, Metamorphosis and Magic," 241.

[9] Franz Bömer, *Ovid: "Metamorphosen,"* (Heidelberg, 1969–83), 3.286 n. 350; *Ovid's "Metamorphoses,"* ed. Anderson (1972 edition: "Medea's dragons have once again got out of hand" (283 n. 371); "it is almost impossible that Medea could have seen the Cephisos on the far side of Mt. Parnassus" (285 n. 388).

Medea's "tour" covered the large part of the terrain of classical mythology, she could just as easily have caught sight of any number of other sites connected to other legends. From a strictly practical point of view, the fields of Calaurea would have been very hard to spot at a certain altitude. Thus Medea's sightseeing functions as a type of Rorschach of the Aegean; what she saw were the people and places most closely connected to her by either similar escapes through flight or revenge for loves lost. One of the first persons whose associations are triggered by the geography which Medea scans below her is Paris, who has been "parva tumulatus harena" (buried with little sand; 361). This brief reference says enough: the pitiful "burial" which Paris received also suggests the final circumstances of his death. When Oenone, abandoned by Paris for Helen, found out that he had been wounded, she exacted revenge by refusing to heal him and so precipitated his death. Thus Ovid introduces the motifs of betrayal in love and its concomitant revenge into the narrative; with the parallel to Paris and his role in the downfall of Troy, Jason's betrayal is exaggerated, changing him from private to very public enemy. In this way Ovid uses the "occasional" myth to develop or anticipate themes already latent in the poem, such as Jason's betrayal and Medea's retaliation; at the same time, the major themes and events of the larger context have full resonance through even the more "baroque" passages.

As she continues to fly above the Aegean, Medea spots the city Ialysos at Rhodes, and Ovid introduces the myth of the Telchines (365–67). In this story, divine retribution is brought to bear upon the Telchines, famous in classical legend for their magical powers. Here they are drowned by Jupiter for the damage they have caused through their powerful sight ("quorum oculos ipso vitiantes omnia visu," 366). The significance of this myth in the Medea story appears to be twofold, as it suggests Medea's partial recognition of the destructive potential both of her own magical powers and of vision itself, a theme to which Ovid gives large play in the Medea/Jason episode. Medea is described at several points early on as entranced by the sight of Jason. The sight of him at Hecate's altar finally causes her to give in: "videt Aesoniden, extinctaque flamma reluxit" (she saw the son of Aeson, and her extinguished flame rekindled; 77). In only twenty-one lines Medea yields to Jason's plea for help: "servabere munere nostro" (you will be saved with my aid; 93)—record time, given her 60-line internal monologue earlier (11–71) which led her

to the opposite conclusion.[10] The Telchines have wrought destruction with the power of their gaze; they are condemned both for this and for the magic with which they have frightened the people. The myth suggests Medea's own vulnerability to the deluding, hence destructive, power of sight and her own growing *cupido* to control by means of her magic.[11]

The central myth mentioned during the course of her flight is that of Cygnus and Phyllius. As with the myths which compose Orpheus' song, placement and length of a given myth in the *Metamorphoses* suggest its importance relative to the others. The Cygnus tale is the longest of the brief myths referred to in Medea's flight, covering nine lines, and it has the greatest number of parallels to Medea's own situation with Jason:

> inde lacus Hyries videt et Cycneia Tempe,
> quae subitus celebravit olor: nam Phyllius illic
> imperio pueri volucresque ferumque leonem
> tradiderat domitos; taurum quoque vincere iussus
> vicerat et stricto[12] totiens iratus amore
> praemia poscenti taurum suprema negabat;
> ille indignatus "cupies dare" dixit et alto
> desiluit saxo. cuncti cecidisse putabant:
> factus olor niveis pendebat in aere pennis. (371–79)

> Then she saw Hyrie's lake and Tempe, famous for Cygnus' rapid metamorphosis into a swan; for there, at the boy's bidding, Phyllius had given Cygnus birds and a menacing lion, having tamed them; ordered also to subdue a bull, Phyllius had done so, and, angered with his love so often slighted, he denied the final gift, the bull, to the one asking: that one, incensed, cried, "you'll wish you'd given it," and jumped off of a cliff. All thought he had perished: turned into a swan, he hovered in the air with white wings.

As Ovid runs through the story, we are reminded of Medea's own "labors" of love for Jason. She helped him complete his own threefold task for King Aeetes, yoking the fire-breathing oxen, sowing the field with dragons' teeth, retrieving the golden fleece. She restored

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[10] Cf. also *Metamorphoses* 7.27–28; 34–35; 43–45; 86–88.

[11] Ovid is also alluding here to Callimachus' use of *Telchines* to refer to his literary opponents. Ovid's readers might have taken this term to refer to bad readers of poetry (*Aetia* 1.1).

[12] For *stricto* (cut off, wounded), Anderson also offers the reading *spreto* ("spurned"; from Andreas Naugerius' 1517 Venice edition), which seems to make more sense in this context.

Aeson to his youth and, finally, murdered King Pelias (although many may attribute this last act exclusively to Medea's final identity as a witch).

In the Cygnus story, Phyllius fulfills Cygnus' commands, which are themselves a series of three labors: he tames the *volucres, ferum, leonem*, and finally the *taurum*. The twist comes at this point and seems to represent a form of Medea's wish-fulfillment, a psychologizing of myth which Ovid later employs with Orpheus' Pygmalion story. While Phyllius completes the final labor, he refuses to hand the bull over to Cygnus, who has denied him his love. Cygnus is himself "indignatus"; to punish Phyllius, he jumps from a rock, and at the last minute he is transformed into a swan. Medea has herself performed countless tasks for Jason; Phyllius is therefore a sympathetic character, but with a difference: having grown weary of having his love denied, he refuses Cygnus' final request. Given the placement and length of the Cygnus myth in the flight passage, it is clear that there is more at work here than just another metamorphosis relating to flight or the portrayal of a witch in whom no human emotion remains.

The final, "oblique" allusion in her journey which relates to Medea's own story is the genitive *Letoidos* (384); as Medea passes over the "fields of Leto's Calaurea," Ovid suggests the betrayal of Jason with the mention of Leto, whose affair with Jupiter caused Juno to bar the pregnant Leto from settling anywhere until Delos allowed her safe haven. Perhaps Medea fancies herself, like Leto, a martyr to flight. Even though Medea is certainly not forced into "exile" as innocent victim, there are parallels in the vagrancy of the two women; even by the end of the Medea tale in the *Metamorphoses*, she has not come to rest but has whirled off again: "Effugit illa necem nebulis per carmina motis" (She flees death in the clouds stirred up by her incantations; 424). Of particular note in this context is Ovid's emphasis in the tale itself; instead of focusing upon the actual murder of Glauce and Medea's sons, he treats these actions at a remove. First he introduces this elaborate flight and uses it as a means to incorporate a number of myths which themselves comment upon magic, revenge, and jilted love, all concerns particular to Medea's own experience. By adding the allusions to Paris, the Telchines, Cygnus, and Leto to the "surface" of his narrative as a type of *amplificatio*, Ovid actually extends the representation of Medea's inmost concerns into the subsequent narrative by a type of ripple effect, much as he will

echo Orpheus' own concerns by means of the many myths which constitute his song. Only at this point does Ovid proceed to his abbreviated account of Medea's brutal revenge at Corinth. In his use of a series of allusions to help develop further Medea's subjectivity, Ovid again pushes back literary boundaries. While Callimachus and Catullus had made much of the allusion, neither created a string of allusions as an amplification of the character's deepest concerns; Ovid thus offers a new means to convey the latter, moving beyond the traditional interior monologue or the narrator's more objective description of the character's plight.

Book 10: the Song of Orpheus

If Ovid occasionally uses indirect means to represent aspects of Medea's character, his characterization of Orpheus is almost entirely indirect, for instead of giving an interior monologue to a character who could certainly have used one to convey his grief over losing Eurydice, Ovid provides—apart from a cursory account of the loss of Eurydice—only a "florilegium"[13] of myths. Although this study in general and this chapter in particular focus on Ovidian representations of the feminine, it is also important to explore Ovid's portrayal of the masculine in this case, for the purposes of balance and context. Orpheus' song in *Metamorphoses* 10 becomes Medea's flight "writ large"; what Ovid had attempted in miniature in his allusion sequence in book 7 is here amplified to fill an entire book. While the content of this song is appropriate for the poet/bard figure, it is nonetheless mysterious. Its very indirection and seeming inconclusiveness make Orpheus a character of near-Protean inaccessibility—yet his role as poet makes his "message," if there is one, all the more alluring. Although the stories he relates are not directly related to his own recent loss of Eurydice, together they do to some extent suggest Orpheus' inner landscape. As noted earlier, classical narrative poetry did not provide male characters with monologues to vent their inmost feelings; yet it is possible to see Ovid venturing in this direction by allowing Orpheus to "speak" his grief through a series

[13] Warren Ginsberg's apt description in *The Cast of Character: The Representation of Personality in Ancient and Medieval Literature* (Toronto, 1983), 67.

of myths—indeed in that respect Orpheus' "voice" is also highly problematic. In a sense Orpheus is given a type of song which would ordinarily be reserved for women in the classical world: a lament for the dead. Thus he will both speak and not speak, express his woe and refrain from expressing it. Here, in Zeitlin's phrase, Orpheus must play the other: he wishes to lament, yet he lets other myths articulate his grief. The song of Orpheus also offers a unique window onto the trademarks of neoteric poetry: it contains two heroine's laments (Myrrha, Atalanta) as well as an extensive digression (Atalanta/Hippomenes) which comments on its narrative context in provocative ways. I will be focusing here on the series of myths composing book 10's latter half: those of Pygmalion, Myrrha, Venus, and Atalanta.

Ovid's account of the Orpheus/Eurydice story is abbreviated by comparison with Virgil's in *Georgics* 4; as with the rendition of the Medea myth in book 7, he condenses those aspects of plot which have been more extensively portrayed by others and concentrates instead on the more psychological factors which precede and/or follow the character's most telling actions. After providing a brief summary of Orpheus' descent to the underworld and his subsequent disaster, Ovid presents a picture of Orpheus in mourning as he resolves to turn his love to young boys. Here Ovid cuts away to a narrative *ecphrasis* or excursus, that of a catalogue of trees which assemble to hear Orpheus' song:

> . . . multas tamen ardor habebat
> iungere se vati, multae doluere repulsae.
> ille etiam Thracum populis fuit auctor amorem
> in teneros transferre mares citraque iuventam
> aetatis breve ver et primos carpere flores.
> Collis erat collemque super planissima campi
> area, quam viridem faciebant graminis herbae:
> umbra loco deerat; qua postquam parte resedit
> dis genitus vates et fila sonantia movit,
> umbra loco venit . . . (81–90)

. . . although desire for the bard possessed many women, many suffered, spurned. Indeed for the Thracians he initiated the practice of transferring love to young boys and plucking the brief springtime and first flowers of youth. There was a hill and on it, an expansive plain, which the grass was making green: the place lacked shade; after the heaven-born poet sat down here and strummed the resounding strings, shade came to the spot . . .

This shift in the narrative serves multiple purposes: it allows Ovid to move away from the intensity of Orpheus' grief and to approach it again from a fresh vantage point further in the narrative; it prepares for the Cyparissus myth which follows; even in its artful catalogue of Orpheus' sylvan audience, it amplifies the themes of grief and loss,[14] and it prepares for the pivotal metamorphosis of Myrrha into a tree in Orpheus' song itself. Charles Segal also notes that Ovid often uses the pastoral setting for a violent scene, as, for example, Orpheus' *sparagmos*[15] in book 11.[16] This catalogue, then, both moves us away from a direct focus upon Orpheus' grief and yet continues to suggest it through the array of trees and their own associations with the motif of loss.

As a final precursor to Orpheus' song, Ovid inserts the myth of Cyparissus. Ovid's transition into this myth is seemingly one of chronological order; at the end of his catalogue he mentions the cypress, which allows him to depart from the Orpheus story momentarily to bring in the myth associated with that tree. Ovid places the tree last for the purposes of the themes he will develop in Orpheus' song. In the Cyparissus myth, the elements of personal responsibility for loss receive greatest attention, as Cyparissus wounds the very stag which he cherishes and is inconsolable. So far, so good, it seems; but then Orpheus, having duly asked Jove and Calliope for inspiration, announces the subjects for the song he is to sing: "pueros . . ./ dilectos superis, inconcessisque puellas/ignibus attonitas meruisse libidine poenam" (boys loved by the gods, girls stricken with forbidden passions, who earned punishment; 153–55). As we examine the myths themselves which compose his song, a curious disparity between his aims and their fulfillment becomes obvious, and this is not the least of the difficulties of Orpheus' song; there is also the larger question of Ovid's interest in characterizing this poet with so indirect a lament for Eurydice. As Warren Ginsberg puts it, "Orpheus's stories are undoubtedly cathartic, yet again we note that they do not

[14] Viktor Pöschl, "Der Katalog der Bäume in Ovids *Metamorphosen*" in *Medium Aevum Vivum: Festschrift für Walther Bulst*, eds. Hans Robert Jauss and Dieter Schaller (Heidelberg, 1960): 13–21.

[15] Retaliatory dismemberment, which was a feature of orgiastic (here, Bacchic) rites.

[16] Charles Segal, *Landscape in Ovid's "Metamorphoses": A Study in the Transformations of a Literary Symbol* (Wiesbaden, 1969), 8.

express his feelings so much as they poeticize them."[17] Ovid seems to lend ambivalence to the closing lines of Orpheus' song: the myths which Orpheus spins out remain those of fragmentation and loss until the very last, as Venus loses Adonis and cries out to the fates.

It may be helpful first to look at the structure of the song, to see in what way it can act as both a vehicle for Orpheus' sorrow and a self-contained collection of myths which themselves comment upon some of the main themes of the *Metamorphoses*. While any schematic representation of a passage or passages cannot do full justice to its complex interrelation of themes, it can be useful as a way of assessing the poet's emphases in proportion and arrangement. The eight myths Orpheus relates in lieu of his own misery can be seen to reflect both his own grief and the thematic structure of the larger poem itself:

Ganymede, Jove	155–61
Hyacinthus, Apollo	162–219
Venus-Cyprian women -Propoetides	220–42
Pygmalion	243–97
Cinyras, Myrrha	298–502
Venus, Adonis	503–739
Atalanta, Hippomenes	560–704 (digression)
death of Adonis	

Nagle notes that the song is "a miniature *carmen perpetuum*, which begins, as does the larger one, with the loves of Jupiter and Apollo."[18] After this initial imitation of the *Metamorphoses*' opening, the song's myths can be seen as frames in the following way: a god's love for and loss of a youth: Apollo/Hyacinthus, Venus/Adonis; impiety punished by Venus: Cyprian women/Propoetides, Atalanta/Hippomenes; piety/impiety central inset: Pygmalion, Cinyras/Myrrha. Nagle observes further that compared to the other story cycles told by a variety of different narrators in the *Metamorphoses*, this one "is a sequence of stories shaped by one narrator, and that one the mythical singer *par excellence*."[19] While the singer's new sexual preference may be seen in

[17] Ginsberg, *Cast of Character*, 65.
[18] Betty Rose Nagle, "Byblis and Myrrha: Two Incest Narratives in the *Metamorphoses*," *Classical Journal* 78 (1983): 305.
[19] Ibid., 305.

the opening myths devoted to gods' loves for boys, for the most part the stories in his song deal with heterosexual love, and it is in the Pygmalion/Myrrha inset in which his more personal agenda both as poet and human experienced in *scelus* can best be seen. But it is important to stress that though the majority of myths in Orpheus' song are connected to the theme of loss in love and some of these to Orpheus' announced "itinerary," it is not the case that each myth the bard sings comments upon his own experience. These myths may form a substitute for his own direct lament, but they do not operate as thinly veiled allegory for the stages of Orpheus' own grief. Indeed, it is almost the case that Orpheus would prefer to sing of others' losses as a way of forgetting his own. The Pygmalion/Myrrha central inset, however, is the point in his song at which the bard becomes more accessible, but even here the myths only suggest the concerns which might beset the grieving poet; "ars adeo latet arte sua" (so much does art lie hidden in its own art; 252).

Pygmalion/Galatea

As a "love story," the Pygmalion myth does possess a certain fairy-tale charm, but ultimately it has an artificial quality, something which Jean de Meun exploits in his version of the myth in the *Roman de la rose*, as he satirizes the Lover's quest for the Rose. The Pygmalion story is worth examining here for the ways it depicts an artist creating the image of a woman who then comes to life, for the illusory ways in which this tale projects an "ideal love." In Ovid, the "love" Pygmalion develops for his ivory statue is little more than infatuation; the metamorphosis of the statue into a living woman is moving and innovative on Ovid's part, but it is ultimately a fantasy, a construction of "amor": Pygmalion "operisque sui concepit amorem" (conceived a love for his own work of art, line 249).[20] The particularly self-conscious lines about the nature of art are followed immediately by the description of Pygmalion's "ignes" (passion) for this

[20] Eleanor Winsor Leach argues that "the element of magic that makes the story a perfect fantasy of gratification also makes it irrelevant to the complexities of love in the real world . . . Pygmalion has created a private love object and realized a private love within a world wholly isolated from reality." "Ekphrasis and the Theme of Artistic Failure in Ovid's *Metamorphoses*," *Ramus* 3 (1974): 125.

beautiful form: "Ars adeo latet arte sua. miratur et haurit/pectore Pygmalion simulati corporis ignes" (Thus does art lie hidden in its own art./Pygmalion marvels and his heart catches fire for the simulated figure; 252–53). Furthermore, the context here is Orpheus' own much more human experience of love which, though marred by loss, places this story in sharp relief as, finally, a "picta pila" or "gemma" (painted stone; gem; 262, 264). Much of the story is devoted to Pygmalion's physical actions as he creates the statue: "sculpsit," "formamque dedit" (sculpted it, gave it shape; 248); "manus operi temptantes admovet," "tenet" (he brings caressing hands to the work; he holds it; 254, 256); "munera fert illi conchas teretesque lapillos," "ornat . . . vestibus artus," "dat longa monilia collo" (he brings it shells and smooth stones; he dresses its limbs with garments; he places a long necklace on its neck; 260, 263, 264); and finally, brings it to life. The transformation scene, which portrays the woman awakening to Pygmalion's touch, is a sensual metamorphosis: "admovet os" (he kissed her; 282); "manibus . . . pectora temptat" (he tries her breasts with his hands); "temptatum mollescit ebur" (the worked ivory begins to soften; 283); "saliunt temptatae pollice venae," (her veins pulse when his thumb tries them; 289). But even their final union, however blessed by Venus ("Coniugio . . . adest dea"; the goddess was present for their nuptials; 295), in some sense never transcends the physical—or the fairy tale—realm. Ultimately the possibility of the living "Galatea's" subjectivity is foreclosed by the fact that the sculptor has created her, "flesh and bone," entirely from his own creative conscious and for the satisfaction of his own sexual and emotional desires. Alison Sharrock observes that when Pygmalion returns home to see the image "of his girl," "there is no original for the *simulacrum* to be the image of, [although] the text seduces the reader into thinking, for a moment, that there is."[21]

Anderson points out that Ovid "views Pygmalion as the sinless artist; he will be rewarded by a marvelous granting of prayer."[22] Pygmalion has lived free of impiety, described early on as "offensus" by the depravity of the Propoetides (244); his prayer to Venus is answered on the merits of his purity of life, we presume. But in the context of Orpheus' own law-breaking ("legem" 50), Pygmalion's

[21] Alison Sharrock, "Womanufacture," *Journal of Roman Studies* 81 (1991), 46.
[22] *Ovid's "Metamorphoses,"* ed. Anderson (1972 ed.), 497 n. 254.

piety, as his "amor," seems strangely superficial, unreachable. In a similar way, the ideal life and piety reflected in the Baucis/Philemon myth in book 8 have a hollow ring when set next to the problem of human frailty; for that, all we have is the extreme impiety and self-centeredness of Erysichthon, a far cry from Orpheus. This fact may explain why, in Orpheus' song, the Pygmalion tale is given less focus (fifty-four lines) by Ovid than is the Myrrha tale. We can see in this cameo Orpheus' wish-fulfillment, as Pygmalion crafts the ideal woman who then comes to life and the two live happily ever after. But no sooner does Orpheus finish this fairytale portrait of human love than he proceeds to complicate it with the darker Cinyras/Myrrha tale. The Pygmalion tale has yet a further function: to represent the limitations of art, since as artist Pygmalion is unable to bring his "eburnea virgo" (ivory girl; 275) to life. Orpheus himself was able to charm the underworld with his art and to transcend the boundaries of life and death, but even this seemingly limitless power was eclipsed by his human frailty as he glanced back at Eurydice. So the song itself, for all of its mystery and charm, is only a temporary diversion from or reflection upon human pain. Ovid suggests here that art can never resolve human pain but can at best provide only some limited expression of it. Orpheus' "monologue" indeed differs from those of Ovid's heroines, yet through it Ovid begins to provide a voice for male subjectivity and emotion.

Myrrha

Introduced initially by means of a genealogical transition (Myrrha being the granddaughter of Pygmalion and his wife), the Myrrha tale is not only sharply juxtaposed with the tale which precedes it, but is itself full of ambiguity and paradox. Furthermore, it serves to illustrate two features of the neoteric narrative style which so influenced Ovid: the heroine's interior monologue and the unorthodox aproach to conventional material (the honor Myrrha receives following the account of her incest with her father). The dramatic portrayal of Myrrha's incest does not function simply as an example of the neoteric interest in abnormal sexual relations; Ovid transforms even that tradition by the moving conclusion of the tale, which leaves us considering the nature of human wrongdoing and its resolution rather than simply observing sexual perversion.

If any myth comes close to suggesting Orpheus' "state of mind" and revealing something of his character to us, it would seem to be the Myrrha myth, calling attention to itself both by placement, length, and emphasis upon *scelus*. Its very placement raises intriguing questions: why would Ovid situate at the center of this *carmen* within a larger *carmen*, at a place doubly conspicuous, a dramatic portrayal of incest? Though the tale itself is freighted with words of censure, it is still the longest of the myths in Orpheus' song. What could Ovid's purposes have been both for his portrayal of Orpheus and for his "own" poem itself, with such a strategic placement of this "dark" myth? One peculiarity of the Alexandrian school of poetry was its special taste for the portrayal of violence, morbidity, or abnormal love, including all varieties of incest (brother-sister being the most common). While in literary portrayals of incest the divine punishment for these crimes was generally waiting in the wings, there was nevertheless a marked interest in the exploration of such human behaviors. Ovid showed less of this Alexandrian penchant for portrayal of the abnormal than did Euphorion or Parthenius,[23] but his portrayal of it is nonetheless highly dramatic and illuminating psychologically. A tragedy such as Euripides' *Hippolytus*, in which Phaedra struggles to conceal her incestuous love for Hippolytus from the nurse, would become a model for Ovid's parallel episode with Myrrha.[24] In the Myrrha story Orpheus treats incest with condemnatory language, but his portrayal of Myrrha suggests the humanity of the criminal, if not of her crime.

Of the eight stories in Orpheus' song, the Myrrha is the only one to live up to his promise to sing of women overcome by forbidden desires,[25] but even so the final condemnation never comes to her. Instead, we have the longest (204 lines) and, arguably, most sympathetic treatment of all the myths in the song. Just as Orpheus'

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[23] Crump, *The Epyllion from Theocritus to Ovid*, 218.

[24] Cinna's *Zmyrna*, most likely published in 56 B.C., was an *epyllion* devoted to the story of Smyrna, whom Aphrodite had inflicted with an impious *amor* for her father. See T. P. Wiseman, *Cinna the Poet and Other Roman Essays* (Leicester, 1974), 48–49. Seneca's *Phoenissae* and *Hippolytus* explore the theme as well. Several of Ovid's *Heroides* are also devoted to the angst of the heroine struggling with desire for a male relative (Phaedra, Canace).

[25] But see Coleman, "Structure and Intention in the *Metamorphoses*," *Classical Quarterly*, n.s., 21 (1972), who points out that Atalanta defies the oracle that warns her against marriage (469).

promises for his song and the song itself are never reconciled, so the poem's narrator (through Orpheus) makes a series of what turn out to be false disclaimers at the opening of the Myrrha tale:

dira canam; procul hinc natae, procul este parentes,
aut, mea si vestras mulcebunt carmina mentes,
desit in hac mihi parte fides, nec credite factum;
vel, si credetis, facti quoque credite poenam!
si tamen admissum sinit hoc natura videri,
gentibus Ismariis et nostro gratulor orbi,
gratulor huic terrae, quod abest regionibus illis,
quae tantum genuere nefas: sit dives amomo,
cinnamaque costumque suum sudataque ligno
tura ferat floresque alios Panchaia tellus,
dum ferat et murram: tanti nova non fuit arbor. (300–10)

I will sing of dreaded things; stay far away, daughters, parents, or if my song charms your minds, don't trust me in this part; don't believe the deed; or if you will believe it, believe the punishment! But if nature permits this crime to be seen—I congratulate the Ismarians and our realm—I congratulate this region, because it is remote from those places, which have produced so great a crime: may Panchaia be abundant in balsam, and let it yield cinnamon and its own costum, and frankincense dripping from wood, and other flowers, so long as it bears also myrrh: a new tree was not worth such a great cost.

This opening passage is rich in irony: the horror with which the narrator recoils at the tale he is about to tell is belied by the very length of the story and pathos with which he describes Myrrha's plight. In describing the effect of Orpheus' own *carmina* upon his listeners, he employs the same verb, "mulcebunt" (they will charm) as Virgil had at *Georgics* 4.510: "mulcentem/tigres et agentem carmine quercus" (charming tigers and moving oaks with his song).[26] The difference here is that Ovid's Orpheus has only an audience of trees, so far as we know; the mention of "natae" (daughters) and "parentes" suggests that Ovid is sacrificing dramatic illusion in order to draw attention to larger concerns worthy of a larger audience.[27] Another ambivalent element in the narrator's proem is his recommendation to his audience if they do decide to believe the *factum*:

[26] Virgil, *Bucolica et Georgica*, ed. T. E. Page (London, 1972).
[27] Nagle, "Byblis and Myrrha," (306 n. 20) also notes the disparity between Orpheus's addressees and the trees that surround him, wondering who his "prospective" audience is.

"facti quoque credite poenam!" (believe also the punishment for the deed! 303). The *poena* itself, if there is one, is Myrrha's transformation into a myrrh tree. He also draws attention to the worth of the "nova arbor." As he sings of the tree and its rare ointment with disdain, he also puns in describing it as "nova," which can mean either "latest" or "new," referring to Myrrha's recent transformation, or "last." Following the second meaning, "nova" can refer as well to the original catalogue of trees, to which the myrrh tree has finally been added, all the more significantly for its delay. The exclamation, "tanti nova non fuit arbor!" (the new tree was not worth such a great cost!), will be contradicted by the conclusion of the Myrrha story, where the myrrh she sheds in place of her tears is clearly of great worth.

In Ovid's treatment of the Myrrha story, its length calls attention to itself, as do the many ambiguities built into its initially condemnatory language. For Orpheus, the words *vetare* (to prohibit, forbid), *scelus* (crime), and *poena* (punishment), one of which surfaces approximately every ten lines in the 204-line narrative, have a double resonance.[28] While the situation and the conditions are not exactly the same, the principles of the Myrrha tale suggest a possible window on Orpheus' view of his own *scelus* in love. Here Ovid is at his most indirect: we can never know precisely Orpheus' thoughts regarding his part in the "gemina nece coniugis" (double death of his wife; 64). As Ginsberg points out regarding Ovid's earlier use of three similes to represent the stunned Orpheus, "a poet's reactions can hardly be anything but the devices of poetry."[29] Under the surface layer of condemnatory language, Ovid creates a powerful portrait of Myrrha. Although Ovid's sources provide the cause for Myrrha's desire for her father (punishment from the gods for refusing Aphrodite), Ovid does not give any explanation:[30] thus Myrrha is both more guilty (she freely chose her passion) and more innocent (she did not earlier reject Aphrodite). As Zeitlin has shown, Myrrha's "offense . . . is redoubled" since she consorts with her father during the festival of

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[28] The frequency of words denoting wrongdoing suggests the enormity of Myrrha's crime: *scelus*—315, 342, 367, 413, 460; *crimen*—312, 470; *nefas*—307, 322, 352, 404; *poena*—303; *facinus*—448; *vetare/vetitus*—353, 354, 435; *paenitere*—461. Nagle, "Byblis and Myrrha," (308) also notes the repetition of these words, but sees them as an expression of "outrage" for both Orpheus and Myrrha.

[29] Ginsberg, *Cast of Character*, 63.

[30] *Ovid's "Metamorphoses,"* ed. Anderson, 501.

Ceres, which required women to abstain from sexual relations with men. The taboo of incest in this case is augmented by the ways in which a father-daughter relation effectively represents a "refusal to exchange women."[31] Against this complex and troubled backdrop, Ovid develops the pathos through a series of episodes in which Myrrha continues to fight against her desire: her monologue (320–55), suicide attempt and discussion with the nurse (377–430), approach to her father's bedroom (454–64), and finally, her sorrowful wanderings after her father finds her out (476–89).

In her interior monologue, Myrrha vacillates between her desire for Cinyras and the knowledge that it is wrong. Myrrha's monologue opens with her agonized awareness both of the heinousness of her desire and of her wish for the freedom to indulge in it:

> quo mente feror? quid molior? . . .
> di, precor, et Pietas sacrataque iura parentum,
> hoc prohibete nefas scelerique resistite nostro,
> si tamen hoc scelus est. sed enim damnare negatur
> hanc Venerem pietas: coeuntque animalia nullo
> cetera dilectu,[32] nec habetur turpe iuvencae
> ferre patrem tergo, fit equo sua filia coniunx. . . .
> felices, quibus ista licent. (320–26; 329–30)

> what am I thinking? what am I attempting? . . . gods, I pray, and piety and sacred rights of parents, protect me from this sin and stop my crime, if this is in fact a crime. But piety is said not to condemn this sort of desire: other animals mate without any discrimination; it isn't offensive for a heifer to be mounted by her father; a horse's daughter can be his consort. . . . They are lucky who are permitted such things!

Myrrha's exempla here show the ways in which her logic has become distorted by her passionate desire, as she uses the mating behavior of animals to justify incestuous father/daughter human relations. But in lines 342–48, Myrrha catches herself up short, as her reason puts a stop to her fantasies:

> . . . . retinet malus ardor amantem
> ut praesens spectem Cinyram tangamque loquarque
> osculaque admoveam, si nil conceditur ultra;
> ultra autem sperare aliquid potes, inpia virgo,

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[31] Zeitlin, *Playing the Other*, 165 n. 112.

[32] I adopt here the reading "dilectu" from Anderson's 1972 edition (*Ovid's "Metamorphoses": Books 6–10*), as it makes more sense in the context than does his Tuebner edition's "delicto."

et, quot confundas et iura et nomina, sentis?
tune eris et matris paelex et adultera patris?
tune soror nati genetrixque vocabere fratris?

An evil desire keeps me here, as a lover, so that I may look at Cinyras in person and touch him and speak to him and kiss him, if nothing more is allowed. Can you hope for anything further, profane girl, and do you see how many rights and names you confound? Will you be both your mother's rival and your father's mistress? Will you be named your son's sister and your brother's mother?

Ovid's analysis of Myrrha's quandary here is rhetorically subtle: he captures the many ironies inherent in her incestuous desire. Myrrha concludes her monologue with a series of negative arguments which show her recognition of the inevitable repercussions for such behavior: the vengeance of the Furies ("nec metues atro crinitas angue sorores" (will you not fear the sisters long-haired with black snakes? 349); breaking nature's law ("neve . . . naturae pollue foedus"; don't debase natural law; 352); the act itself is its own prohibition ("res ipsa vetat!"; 354); Cinyras "pius . . . memorque est/moris" (is devout and mindful of proper conduct; 355–56). Her closing wish, that Cinyras shared her passion, is only a desperate cry in the face of these many arguments against it.

Nighttime arrives to find Myrrha so tormented that she cannot rest. Her restless mind is likened to a tree which sways before its final fall. Finally Myrrha gives in and ties a noose around her neck; the scene evokes Phaedra's suicide in Euripides' *Hippolytus*. Zeitlin observes that Euripides' second version of the play presents Phaedra as "a noble woman who struggles heroically to suppress the fatal passion with which Aphrodite has afflicted her" for her step-son. Euripides sanitized Phaedra in the second version in response to the outcry against her original "shameless" character,[33] rather than perhaps because of an intrinsic interest in exploring the anguish of an innocent character; yet whatever Euripides' motives in creating the second Phaedra, she stood as a Greek model of the feminine caught in dire psychological straits, and a character Ovid would draw upon in his creation of Myrrha. But the key difference in Ovid is that so far the heroine's intent is something known only to her; neither the nurse

[33] Froma I. Zeitlin, "Travesties of Gender and Genre in Aristophanes' *Thesmophoriazousae*," in *Reflections of Women in Antiquity*, ed. Helene P. Foley (New York, 1981), 216 n. 36.

nor Cinyras know of it. Myrrha's remorse drives her to attempt this extreme action when only she is aware of her desire. Several phrases in particular suggest that Ovid was adapting Euripidean passages: before Phaedra reveals the identity of her love to the nurse, she admits that her sin has so far affected only her soul, not her hands ("χεῖρες μὲν ἁγναί, φρὴν δ'ἔχει μίασμά τι" 317);[34] Myrrha echoes this sentiment in her interior monologue, trying even to keep it out of her mind: "at tu, dum corpore non es/Passa nefas, animo ne concipe" (but since you have not committed the sin in the flesh, don't contemplate it; 352–53). Myrrha's nurse, once she learns of the source of Myrrha's anguish, resolves to arrange a nighttime visit for Myrrha so that she may satisfy her charge's desire. Phaedra also hints of her feelings when she suggests the dark fate awaiting her and her nurse, should the truth come out. The nurse inquires what fate could be worse than losing her, to which Phaedra replies, "ὀλῆι. τὸ μέντοι πρᾶγμ' ἐμοὶ τιμὴν φέρει," that her own death will bring her honor (329). While these words are ironic in view of the shame which will attend Phaedra's eventual suicide, in Ovid Myrrha receives *honor* for her final compunction for her *scelus*: "Est honor et lacrimis" (There is honor even for tears; 501). Furthermore, after the nurse learns of Phaedra's intent, she cautions Phaedra to refrain from this passion. The chorus intervenes to praise Phaedra but admits that its praise may strike her as inappropriate compared to the sober words of the nurse. Phaedra responds with comments again suggestive of Ovid's final transformation of Myrrha: she rebukes the sweet words ("τερπνὰ"; 488) of the chorus and pleads instead for words which will help preserve her reputation ("ἀλλ' ἐξ ὅτου τις εὐκλεὴς γενήσεται" 489), again a hope which will prove futile. In Ovid, however, there will not only be honor for tears but it will be perpetual: her new "nomen . . . nulloque tacebitur aevo" (name will be silent in no age; 502).

Orpheus continues to build pathos in his account as he describes Myrrha's faltering approach to her father's bedroom after the nurse has deceived Cinyras into accepting "a young girl" for a nighttime visit while her mother is away attending the festival of Ceres. Nagle has pointed out the multiple bad omens attending Myrrha's visit as well as the fear and dread which characterize her as the nurse leads her there.[35] As the drama heightens, Orpheus emphasizes Myrrha's

[34] Euripides, *Hippolytus*. *Euripidis Fabulae*, ed. J. Diggle (Oxford, 1984).
[35] Nagle, "Byblis and Myrrha," 312–13.

unwillingness with words which qualify the frequent mention of *scelus* and *crimen* throughout the story:

poplite succiduo genua intremuere, fugitque
et color et sanguis, animusque relinquit euntem;
quoque suo propior sceleri est, magis horret; et ausi
paenitet et vellet non cognita posse reverti. (458–63)

Her faltering knees quiver, and both color and blood flee from her, and her reason leaves her as she proceeds; the closer she is to the crime, the more she is terrified; she regrets her daring and wishes she could turn back without being recognized.

By the time the nurse has handed Myrrha over to Cinyras, Orpheus has developed our sympathy for this reluctant girl, who is increasingly at the mercy of her nurse and her father. Often in classical literature the nurse plays the role of go-between; the difference here is that this nurse becomes the bawd, initially of Myrrha's desire, and then of Cinyras'.

Orpheus closes the story of Myrrha by describing her distraught wanderings and final transformation after her father's discovery of her identity. The revelation scene itself incorporates ironies which increase our perception of Myrrha as victim. Cinyras compounds the sense of this pathetic *amor* with his lighthearted request to know the identity of the "amantem" (lover) with whom he has shared "tot concubitus" (so many sexual unions; 473), words recalling the nurse's deception of Cinyras with her facile description of the girl who had "veros . . . amores" (true love; 439) for him. Only with a light brought in ("inlato lumine"; 473) does the full horror of the situation dawn upon Cinyras, and he is ready to take his daughter's life, but Myrrha escapes, pregnant, and wanders to Arabia. Cinyras' own behavior is no more salutary: he drunkenly engages in repeated sexual liaisons while his wife is attending a religious festival requiring her to abstain from sexual contact with him. Although Cinyras is innocent of any intent to commit incest, Ovid's portrayal of him here is problematic. Cinyras becomes the righteous avenger of wrong:

inlato lumine vidit
et scelus et natam verbisque dolore retentis
pendenti nitidum vagina deripit ensem;
Myrrha fugit . . . (473–76)

when a light was brought in, Cinyras saw both his crime and his daughter and, withholding words from grief, he siezed the shining sword from its hanging sheath; Myrrha fled . . .

While Roman laws on adultery allowed the father to slay the guilty parties when they were discovered in his own household,[36] Cinyras is himself one of the guilty parties; furthermore, his own infidelities are occluded by Myrrha's own wrongdoing.

After a nine-month sojourn, Myrrha comes to rest, exhausted and despondent, and seeks to right herself with the gods. But unlike Parthenius' Harpalyce and Daphne, who seek escape from a world of impending doom with regard only for their own safety, Myrrha's concern is that she may violate both the worlds of the living and the dead ("ne violem" 485); she admits her wrongdoing outright, "merui nec triste recuso/supplicium!" (I deserve, I do not refuse, wretched punishment! 484–85), and then asks to be transformed so as not to taint either realm. By the end of the tale, rather than the condemnation she deserves for her great impiety towards her father, mother, and the goddess Ceres, Myrrha is given honor when she asks forgiveness of the gods for her crime. All sense of "poena" (punishment) disappears as we watch her metamorphosis into a myrrh tree; even the last vestiges of Myrrha's personality, her tears, are transfigured as precious myrrh. Orpheus' design "appears" to backfire: his one portrayal of a woman given over to forbidden passion turns out to be highly sympathetic and receives little of the censure which he so threatens at the opening. Paradoxically, in the tale relating the worst of human offences, Ovid treats the questions of human worth and dignity and provides a transformation which brings honor to the least likely suppliant. This is one illustration of the complex nature of Ovid's rendering of female psychological states: the heroine may be, like Medea or Myrrha, gripped by the most extreme—even irrational or abnormal—emotion, and there is also a strong element of voyeurism evident in Ovid's lengthy development of the narrative; yet her pain and self-scrutiny are sometimes handled compassionately by Ovid. With both the flight of Medea, through which Ovid employs a cluster of myths to adumbrate the powerful complex of feelings at work in the abandoned Medea, and the resolution of the tale of Myrrha, the perspective widens. Although in both cases we begin with the intense psychological battle articulated through the spoken lament, Ovid leaves us considering larger situations of

[36] *The Digest of Justinian*, eds. Theodore Mommsen, Paul Kreuger, and Alan Watson (Philadelphia, 1985), 4 vols.; 4: 806b.

human grief and distress even if he has "had to" use the feminine "to think with."

Venus/Adonis

Atalanta/Hippomenes

The Atalanta/Hippomenes story follows as a digression within the final Venus/Adonis tale and offers a a heroine's monologue which differs yet again from Medea's and Myrrha's. As the tale begins, Ovid employs a genealogical transition (Adonis being the issue of Myrrha and Cinyras) but capitalizes on the tragic "curse" inherent in this troubled family line. The tragic story of Venus and Adonis encloses a digression connected by its focus on love ending in tragedy, the problematic story of Atalanta and Hippomenes, and simultaneously refracts Orpheus' own loss on a variety of levels. Marjorie Crump observes that Orpheus' song approximates an *epyllion* in its form, particularly with the Atalanta/Hippomenes digression. She notes that in *epyllia* before Ovid, the digression was generally unrelated to the larger narrative context it interrupted.[37] But as with the Medea flight passage, Ovid uses digression as well as "occasional" myth to comment upon, amplify, or undercut the themes of the surrounding narrative. The Atalanta/Hippomenes story, which answers the myths of the Propoetides and Cyprian women as Venus punishes impiety, also serves to suggest Orpheus' ambiguous stance regarding heterosexual love. Where Orpheus had finally reversed the Myrrha tale's opening warnings by presenting a sympathetic treatment of her situation, he employs Venus as a narrator to present, again, a generally non-condemning picture of heterosexual love in this myth. Only the final punishment, in which Atalanta and Hippomenes are turned into lions for Hippomenes' failure to thank Venus for her help in the race, approaches the fulfillment of Orpheus' promise to portray women stricken with forbidden love. Atalanta's actions are clearly more ambiguous than Myrrha's, in terms of "forbidden passion"; she may fit within this rubric because of the oracle, by which

[37] Crump, *Epyllion*, 207, 23.

any marriage entails her doom (and thus is, in a sense, "forbidden") or because of her desecration of Cybeles' shrine with Hippomenes. But as Robert Coleman has pointed out, Venus' final moral to Adonis, regarding hunting such fierce animals as lions, hardly explains the sympathetic portrayal of Atalanta's indecision over Hippomenes and of their love story itself.[38]

Atalanta, daughter of king Schoeneus of Boeotia, is famed for her beauty and swiftness as a runner. In Apollodorus and Hyginus Atalanta, a Diana-figure, pursues each suitor on the track with a spear and murders him.[39] Yet as Zeitlin points out, in Greek myth the law of the talion is regularly at work: "any extreme attitude or form of behavior is countered exactly by its unacceptable reverse, and the offender is punished exactly according to the nature of the offense. Thus the one who refuses eros or scorns Aphrodite is typically smitten in turn with an immoderate eros—transgressive, illicit, or impossible to fulfill." She goes on to note that (in Greek literature) both "Atalanta and Melanion, both of whom had previously resisted marriage, consummate a passionate and sacrilegious union in the temple of the goddess herself."[40] Ovid changes the story, however; he contributes the oracle that she will lose her life through marriage, and this prophecy then becomes the cause for her antisocial behavior. Ovid tames this virago, marked by her unnatural aversion to eros in the Greek tradition, and makes her the sympathetic victim of an unjust fate: that her husband will be her downfall; that she might try to escape him, but it will be impossible and that she will ultimately lose herself (10.565–67). Out of fear of the oracle, Atalanta avoids all social contact with men, living in the woods alone; she herself sets up the race to fend off the throng of suitors. Suitors join the race knowing that their lives will be the price of losing to her. Hippomenes, in love with Atalanta, joins the race and wins only through the aid of Venus. Clearly for Ovid the chief interest is exploring the anguish produced within a psyche pressed on all sides: Atalanta is subjected to an unjust fate; but in classical tradition her avoidance of suitors will result in some form of punishment. In Ovid's version of the story, the law of the talion comes

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[38] Coleman, "Structure and Intention," 469.
[39] Anderson, ed., *Ovid's "Metamorphoses": Books 6–10*, 523 n. 571–72.
[40] Zeitlin, *Playing the Other*, 278.

into play when Venus is irked by Hippomenes' neglect of her deity and punishes him accordingly. By thus shifting the reason for Atalanta's antisocial behavior, Ovid both makes her sympathetic to the reader and legitimizes the uncertainty which pervades her monologue.

Ovid's portrayal of Atalanta's and Hippomenes' inner struggles at the race is paradigmatic of classical characterization of female and male psychological conflict. Hippomenes, like the majority of male characters in classical narrative literature (outside of the *exclusus amator* and elegy traditions), gives little vent to his emotional conflict. What Ovid does say about Hippomenes' worries, after the onset of love, is succinct, unelaborated:

> et, ne quis iuuenum currat uelocius, optat.
> inuidiamque timet. "sed cur certaminis huius
> intentata mihi fortuna relinquitur?" inquit,
> "audentes deus ipse iuuat." dum talia secum
> exigit Hippomenes, passu uolat alite uirgo. (583–87)

> And he hopes none of the youths runs faster (than he). And he fears envy. "But why haven't I tried the outcome of this race?" he asks. "God himself helps the ones who dare." While Hippomenes deliberates such things with himself, the girl flies by with winged step.

Where Ovid devotes several pages to teasing out the ramifications of a heroine's emotional quandary, with Hippomenes he reduces the problem to five lines.

Atalanta, on the other hand, experiences a wide range of conflicting emotions, and Ovid fleshes these out in her monologue. Atalanta's debate over whether or not to love Hippomenes is relatively brief (twenty-four lines) in comparison to other monologues in the *Metamorphoses*, and it contains relatively few arguments against the beloved. Such a debate on the part of the heroine may have become a standard feature of the later *epyllia*.[41] Pity for his youth and innocence informs all her thoughts: if it weren't for her, he would surely live. Atalanta's vacillating feelings for Hippomenes are illustrated by the paragraph divisions in the translation below:

> quis deus hunc formosis . . . iniquus
> perdere vult caraeque iubet discrimine vitae

[41] Lyne, *Ciris*, 34.

coniugium petere hoc? non sum me iudice tanti.
nec forma tangor (poteram tamen hac quoque tangi),
sed quod adhuc puer est: non me movet ipse, sed aetas.
quid, quod inest virtus et mens interrita leti?
quid, quod ab aequorea numeratur origine quartus?
quid, quod amat tantique putat conubia nostra,
ut pereat, si me fors illi dura negarit?
dum licet, hospes, abi thalamosque relinque cruentos!
coniugium crudele meum est, tibi nubere nulla
nolet, et optari potes a sapiente puella.—
cur tamen est mihi cura tui tot iam ante peremptis?
viderit! intereat, quoniam tot caede procorum
admonitus non est agiturque in taediae vitae.—
occidet hic igitur, voluit quia vivere mecum,
indignamque necem pretium patietur amoris?
non erit invidiae victoria nostra ferendae.
sed non culpa mea est! utinam desistere velles,
aut, quoniam es demens, utinam velocior esses!
a! quam virgineus puerili vultus in ore est!
a! miser Hippomene, nollem tibi visa fuissem!
vivere dignus eras. quodsi felicior essem,
nec mihi coniugium fata inportuna negarent,
unus eras, cum quo sociare cubilia vellem. (10.611–35)

What god, jealous of handsome youths, wants this one to die and orders him to seek this marriage at the risk of his dear life? I am not worth so great a price, in my own opinion. Nor am I moved by his beauty, although I could be, but by the fact that he is still a boy. He himself doesn't affect me, but his young age.

What of his strength and mind unafraid of death? What if he claims descent from Neptune? What if he loves; does he value our marriage so much that he would die, if a harsh fate denies me to him?

Stranger, escape this cruel marriage while there is time! My marriage is cruel; no girl will refuse to marry you, and a wise girl will desire you.

Why then do I care for you when so many others have died before? Let him see to his own actions! Let him die, since he has not been warned by the slaughter of so many suitors and he is led into a weariness for life!

Will he die therefore, because he wanted to live with me, and will he suffer an unworthy death as the price for love? My victory will be one of tortuous resentment.

But it is not my fault!

If only you wanted to stop, or, since you are mad, if only you were faster! But like an innocent girl's is the expression on his boyish face! Oh, poor Hippomenes, I wish I had never been seen by you! You were worthy to live. But if I were luckier, and the hostile fates had

> not denied me marriage, you were the only one with whom I would want to share my marriage bed.

Here we see the traditional psychomachia between *ratio* and *furor*, reason and passion. In the opening we may detect Atalanta's denial of her own feelings: "He himself doesn't affect me," accentuated later in her repeated protests, "quid, quod," (so what if. . .; 616–18). Ovid portrays Atalanta's confusion here powerfully; further in her monologue she questions the injustice of her own fate in poignant terms: "Will he die therefore, because he wanted to live with me, and will he suffer an unworthy death as the price for love?. . . . But if I were luckier, and the hostile fates had not denied me marriage . . ." Underneath the extensive arguments on Hippomenes' behalf is the unexpressed current of fear as to what she herself will lose. Anderson observes:

> We might be tempted to read this dilemma as Ovid's poetic representation of the universal dilemma of the woman (or man) in love: she must "die" as an independent *puella* in order to become a wife.[42]

While Atalanta never directly addresses this issue, we sense it as a subtext underlying her accumulation of arguments against beating him: Atalanta's silent warning to Hippomenes, "thalamosque relinque" (escape this marriage), seems the logical consequence of her preceding thoughts regarding his many virtues. But in the imperative we also sense her fear that she might lose her own life, namely her identity.

One striking feature of Ovid's portrayal of Atalanta is her tendency to be indirect, to shy away from—or even deny—admitting her own love for Hippomenes. The entire problem, as she presents it, is how Hippomenes may suffer for her sake. She can speak eloquently of Hippomenes' love for her, but the closest she comes to an outright admission of her love is the self-chiding question, "cur . . . est mihi cura?" (why do I care for him? 623) and the concession that she would want to marry him, with the reference to the marriage bed (*cubilia*).[43] On the whole her expression of affection is largely

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[42] Anderson, *Ovid's "Metamorphoses,"* 527 n. 629–30.

[43] Atalanta's phrasing here echoes that of Dido in *Aeneid* 4.19, where she admits that Aeneas is the only one for whom she would consider breaking her vow of loyalty to her deceased husband Sychaeus: "huic uni forsan potui succumbere culpae." *The Aeneid*, ed. R. D. Williams (London, 1987). R. J. Tarrant provided this observation.

indirect. Ovid's elusive, swift-footed runner is equally elusive in her debate, both in its length and in its content. In Atalanta we see sorrow and pity for Hippomenes' fate, but Ovid sets these feelings in a web of indirection. First, Orpheus relates this, the only substantive tale concerning heterosexual love in his song, through another narrator, Venus. Then there is Atalanta's own indirect expression of her love: her hesitance in directly admitting her love for Hippomenes, her preference for explaining her plight mostly in terms of how the young man may suffer, and the undercurrent of fear of losing her identity, combine to give her portrait a masterly subtlety surprising for the brief length of the debate.

After the horn blast starts the race and Atalanta is on the verge of passing Hippomenes, she delays, looking at him: "o quotiens, cum iam posset transire, morata est/spectatosque diu vultus invita reliquit!" (oh how often, when she could now pass him, did she hesitate, and unwillingly leave behind the face she lingered over! 10.661–62). In the exclamation we may hear another register: the sentiment of the larger narrator, Orpheus, himself well-acquainted with the tragic outcome of the backward glance on his own beloved. Hippomenes eventually asks Venus for help; the goddess provides him with three golden apples designed to distract Atalanta and divert her from the race course. But as the story ends, Hippomenes, who has failed to thank Venus for her aid, is punished by the goddess, who inflicts them with lust. Venus describes her resentment:

> subitam convertor in iram,
> contemptuque dolens, ne sim spernenda futuris,
> exemplo caveo meque ipsa exhortor in ambos.
> (10.683–85)

> suddenly I was enraged, grieving over his contempt; lest I be scorned by others, I took precaution through an example and pressed myself on both.

Hippomenes and Atalanta then make love in Cybele's temple, invoking the wrath of Cybele also; she turns them into lions to symbolize the excess of their passion. In Ovid, Hippomenes' failure to offer Venus thanks prompts the goddess to afflict the couple with a fit of sexual passion; it is Hippomenes' neglect, rather than Atalanta's earlier avoidance of eros, that causes the divine display of wrath. Yet the metamorphosis of Atalanta in this story, however moving the depiction of her psychological battle over Hippomenes, is doubly

tragic. Her transformation actually begins much earlier in the story: she is initially forced to become a Diana figure, wanting to rid herself of a host of suitors; then she is affected by Venus' intervention in her race with Hippomenes, such that she slows down, distracted by the golden apples which he throws as they run the race. Venus' aid to Hippomenes helps tip the balance for Atalanta, already attracted to Hippomenes. But the final punishment and transformation of Atalanta are occluded by the poet's emphasis on Hippomenes' ingratitude and Venus' resultant wrath. Atalanta, then, is drawn down with Hippomenes as the goddess punishes both for Hippomenes' wrongdoing. In this way, the classical myth subsumes Atalanta's identity under Hippomenes'. Finally, the Atalanta story, which comes to a tragic conclusion, is itself framed by two myths relating loss in love, the Venus/Adonis and the larger Orpheus/Eurydice. Part of the poignancy of both the Atalanta and Orpheus love stories is that the tragedy (in both cases a lack of self-restraint) occurs only after the lovers have overcome the impossible, and just when they are about to emerge victorious in their love.[44] In this, the final depiction of internal conflict in Orpheus' song, Ovid shows his deftness at portraying maximum psychological complexity in minimal space.

What we can say of Orpheus' song, finally, is that while it does not come to any psychological resolution, it does reveal the outlook and experience of the bard in its portrayal of the piety/impiety myths. This, if anywhere, is where we come closest to gauging Orpheus' character; his own experience with limitations has enabled him to read human error more humanely. Orpheus is not a moralizing poet; the bulk of the myths in his song deal more straightforwardly with loss in love. If there is impiety of any type which is particular to this song, it would be impiety in love, or a failure to worship Venus (Propoetides; Atalanta/Hippomenes). While there is no final resolution over Orpheus' grief in his song, his own error has humanized his particular reading of man's limitations, which is, ironically, its own (admittedly small) compensation. With Orpheus' song, then, as with the flight of Medea, Ovid shows his expertise at rendering the complex emotional states of the distraught lover through the most indirect form: the sequence of myths in place of (or in

[44] Insight provided by R. J. Tarrant.

addition to) the straightforward lament. With Orpheus Ovid ventures on explorations of the subjectivity of the male character, yet lacking any direct expression of sorrow, we are left only with hints and suggestions of the bard's inner landscape.

As the Medea and Orpheus episodes reveal, Ovid employed many varied strategies to render emotional turmoil, particularly in his female characters. Medea's flight is not simply the "baroque" assortment of myths Bömer would make it; rather, Ovid uses it as a form of digression or elaboration to amplify Medea's most troubling concerns: magic, spurned love, and revenge. The song of Orpheus can be seen as an *epyllion*, with its Atalanta/Hippomenes digression as told by Venus, or as a thematic digression itself which threatens to outplay the story of Orpheus/Eurydice. Orpheus is one of Ovid's most elusive characters; it is only through the multiple myths which make up his song that we can approach him. The way he retells the Pygmalion and Myrrha tales suggests his own perspective on his loss of Eurydice and what recompense there may be for human frailty. As such, his song is all the more profound for its indirection and subtlety. The song ultimately reveals to us something of Orpheus' own interiority, particularly through the lens of Myrrha's transformation; yet in the end, Orpheus' own anguish is not openly voiced. As so often, the feminine characters within his song have been better vehicles "to think with." Zeitlin's observation about Greek drama's employment of the feminine is pertinent here, particularly given Ovid's strong debt to Euripides: "the final paradox may be that theater uses the feminine for the purposes of imagining a fuller model for the masculine self, and 'playing the other' opens that self to those often banned emotions of fear and pity."[45] Ovid's interest in portraying the heroine's inner world is especially evident in the characters of Medea, Myrrha, and Atalanta, whose discourse typifies that of many Ovidian heroines. In the *Metamorphoses* Ovid unceasingly innovates, radically breaking new ground both in the use of genre and in the depiction of female and male psychological states. In the Middle Ages, however, Ovid's *Metamorphoses* itself was transformed in a multiplicity of ways by commentators, redactors, and editors of

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[45] Zeitlin, *Playing the Other*, 363.

the poem. In the next chapter I will be exploring some of the earlier medieval commentaries on Ovid's poem for their readings of his heroines, to gain a more specific sense of the ways in which these commentators both comprehended and rewrote the feminine landscapes which Ovid created in his *Metamorphoses*.

CHAPTER THREE

REPRESENTATIONS OF THE FEMININE IN MEDIEVAL COMMENTARIES ON *METAMORPHOSES* 7 AND 10 (1100–1328)

Production of commentaries on Ovid's works was a flourishing, and highly intertextual, industry in the high and later Middle Ages. Yet, as was noted earlier, the prolific medieval commentary traditions constructed an "Ovid" or "Ovids" which did not always resemble the classical *auctor* per se, so far as the latter can be known. As D. F. McKenzie has said of bibliographical studies, but with application here: "any history of the book . . . must be a history of misreadings. . . . Every society rewrites its past, every reader rewrites its texts . . ."[1] So as to gain a more complete sense of the ways in which medieval commentators themselves responded to Ovid's innovations with the female landscape, this chapter will present a series of illustrations from the medieval commentary traditions on books 7 and 10 of the *Metamorphoses*, including passages from Fulgentius, Arnulf of Orléans, John of Garland, William of Orléans, the "Vulgate," the *Ovide moralisé*, and Giovanni del Virgilio. It is not my aim here to provide an exhaustive analysis of the interrelationships between the sources used by successive medieval commentaries on books 7 and 10; instead I would like to demonstrate some of the ways in which these commentators differed from each other in their treatment, and varying perceptions, of Ovid's heroines. In this chapter and the following, I include a range of different types of works beyond the commentaries in Latin editions of the *Metamorphoses*, so as to reflect the wide spectrum of versions of the poem which were available in the Middle Ages and early modern period. There was a range of readers of Ovid's poem, including clerics, students, preachers, poets, and any others (not covered in the previous list) who read Ovid's poem for pleasure or instruction. The *Metamorphoses* was worked, and reworked, to suit a wide array of purposes and cultural prerogatives.

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[1] D. F. McKenzie, *Bibliography and the Sociology of Texts* (Cambridge, 1999), 25.

Much excellent scholarship has been devoted to medieval commentaries, both on classical works in general,[2] and specifically on Ovid.[3] I am using the word *commentary* in its broadest sense in this study, to include a tradition of glosses accompanying the text of the *Metamorphoses* (Arnulf of Orléans, the "Vulgate" commentary) as well as summaries which traveled independently of the poem (John of Garland, Pierre Bersuire). Insufficient attention has been paid to these commentators' assessments of male and female characterization *per se* in comparison to their multiple allegorical readings of Ovid's myths. On close examination, William of Orléans, the "Vulgate" commentator, Thomas Walsingham, Raphael Regius, and Jacob Pontanus all reveal interest in such matters.

In many medieval commentaries, the predominating approach to interpretation of classical literature was the theory that underneath

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[2] For general studies of medieval commentary traditions on classical literature, see *Medieval Literary Theory and Criticism c. 1105–c. 1375: The Commentary Tradition*, ed. A. J. Minnis and A. B. Scott, with the assistance of David Wallace, rev. ed. (Oxford, 1991), 314–72; A. J. Minnis, *Medieval Theory of Authorship: Scholastic Literary Attitudes in the Later Middle Ages*, 2nd ed. (Philadelphia, 1988), 15–16, 55–57; Christopher Baswell, *Virgil in Medieval England: Figuring the "Aeneid" from the Twelfth Century to Chaucer* (Cambridge, 1995); Jane Chance, *Medieval Mythography: from Roman North Africa to the School of Chartres, A.D. 433–1177* (Gainesville, 1994); Judson Boyce Allen, *The Ethical Poetic of the Later Middle Ages* (Toronto, 1982); Don Cameron Allen, *Mysteriously Meant: The Rediscovery of Pagan Symbolism and Allegorical Interpretation in the Renaissance* (Baltimore, 1970); and Beryl Smalley, *English Friars and Antiquity in the Early Fourteenth Century* (Oxford, 1960).

[3] It is not possible to provide more than a survey here on the subject of medieval and early modern commentaries on Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. Most commentaries discussed in this study are in Latin. In choosing a larger number of commentaries and attempting to represent traditions as they develop, I must necessarily omit some material. For related studies, see Paule Demats, *Fabula. Trois études de mythographie antique et médiévale* (Geneva, 1973); Frank T. Coulson, ed., *The "Vulgate" Commentary on Ovid's "Metamorphoses": The Creation Myth and the Story of Orpheus*, Toronto Medieval Latin Texts (Toronto, 1991); Frank T. Coulson and Bruno Roy, *Incipitarium Ovidianum: a Finding Guide for Texts related to the Study of Ovid in the Middle Ages* (Turnholt, 2000); Hexter, *Ovid and Medieval Schooling*; Hexter, "Medieval Articulations of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*: From Lactantian Segmentation to Arnulfian Allegory," *Mediaevalia* 13 (1987); Ann Moss, *Latin Commentaries on Ovid From the Renaissance* (Summertown, 1998); Moss, *Ovid in Renaissance France: A Survey of the Latin Editions of Ovid and Commentaries Printed in France before 1600* (London, 1982); Judson Boyce Allen, "Eleven Unpublished Commentaries on Ovid's *Metamorphoses* and Two Other Texts of Mythographic Interest," in *The Mythographic Art: Classical Fable and the Rise of the Vernacular in Early France and England*, ed. Jane Chance (Gainesville, 1991), 281–89. For the treatment of Ovid's poetics, not gender, by the commentators discussed here and in chapter 4, see Kathryn L. McKinley, "The Medieval Commentary Tradition 1100–1500 on *Metamorphoses* 10," *Viator* 27 (1996): 117–49.

the *integumentum* of the fable's story line, or its surface, lay the true significance (or significances) of a moral or spiritual nature. In fact, it was not until the early sixteenth century that what had been extremely popular religious *moralitates* provided in the margins and sometimes in place of the original text, came under harsh scrutiny and even scorn, with the new, more rigorous standards humanist scholars were applying to the study and interpretation of classical texts. Pierre Bersuire's *Ovidius moralizatus* (c. 1348), which enjoyed enormous popularity for two centuries, was eventually banned by the Church in 1559, a fact which Ann Moss takes as a reflection not only of distaste with the mixture of sacred and pagan literature but also of the increasing disapproval of the sometimes far-fetched allegorizations applied to classical literature.[4] Yet as A. J. Minnis has pointed out, much of the groundwork for the humanists' secular and rhetorical traditions of reading classical works was actually laid by medieval literary theory and present within these allegorizing commentaries:

> Even the most "original" literary theory produced in fourteenth- and fifteenth-century Italy takes its points of departure and many of its categories and basic ideas from scholastic literary theory . . . the usefulness of poetry (*utilitas*), its place within the hierarchy of the sciences, its spiritual and moral senses, the ancient poet-theologians (or "myth-lovers"), the styles common to both classical and scriptural writers, and so forth . . . in Italy both the humanists who aggrandized poetry and the latter-day scholastics who classified it as the lowest branch of logic owe a considerable debt to the schoolmen—particularly the Parisian schoolmen of the thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries.[5]

Medieval commentators, despite their employment of literary theory, do not seem to have been cognizant of many of the rhetorical traditions influencing Ovid in his construction of the heroine's monologue; even if Euripides and Catullus had been available to them it is doubtful if medieval exegetical practices would have led these readers to draw connections, to study influence, and so forth. Yet their comparative lack of awareness, or understanding, of classical traditions allows us to see all the more clearly what medieval commentators did make of these heroines, unaided by the cultural and rhetorical contexts we can access today. While the twelve commentaries I discuss below provide a more particular illustration of the

[4] Moss, *Ovid in Renaissance France*, 27.
[5] Minnis, *Medieval Literary Theory*, 9.

different reception of Ovid's heroines in different periods and cultural settings, the commentaries of the "Vulgate" and Raphael Regius—both often offering non-moralizing comments on female characters—had a much more extensive audience than many of the others discussed here. Therefore not all commentaries should be weighted equally in terms of their representations of the feminine. Ultimately the heterogeneity of readings (mainly clerical) of Ovid's heroines between 1100 and 1618 illustrates that commentators were not uniformly bound to a rhetoric of praise or blame when reading the feminine.

Recent research on commentaries has offered new ways of mining these works for their cultural and historical information. Glenn Most discusses the importance of considering commentaries from the standpoint of culture and ideology:

> It may be presumed that most of those who write commentaries are members of the cultural institutions which are legitimated, at least in part, by their privileged access to the authoritative texts which they protect, divulge, and conceal . . . commentaries occur for the most part not at the margins or edges of a society but at the very heart of its institutions of cultural power. . . . One function of a commentary is to (re-)confirm, (re-)distribute, and (re-)impose within a society an authority whose meaning is not longer entirely self-evident. Hence . . . commentators tend to defend and protect the authority of the author they comment upon. But at the same time commentaries can perhaps also be considered, implicitly at least, as being subversive of that authority, inasmuch as they always indicate, by explicit acknowledgment and by tacit assertion, the difficulties in making its meaning transparent.[6]

Most also observes that an additional function of commentaries is pedagogic, making the reader "more sovereign" over the material at hand. With reference to medieval and early modern commentaries, I would perhaps qualify the terms Most uses, from the opposition between confirming ideologies and subverting them, to say rather that commentators negotiate the authority of the texts they read, so as to reposition those works vis à vis current notions of authority. As William Kennedy has argued, "By expressing meanings that were previously implicit, ignored, or repressed, commentaries transform the representational powers of texts and make them work in new ways. They canonize texts, authorize specific understandings of tex-

[6] Glenn Most, ed., *Commentaries Kommentare* (Göttingen, 1999), ix, x.

tual meaning as official or legitimate, and ordain their reproduction or replacement according to the needs of the present."[7]

Analysis of medieval and early modern commentaries has been given additional theoretical impetus with the work of Deborah Parker, who challenges scholars to rethink the conventional critical attitudes towards *accessus*, digression, and the interplay of different commentary traditions often gathered into one medieval commentary.[8] As just one example, Parker identifies the difference between the programmatic *accessus* itself and the hermeneutics of the body of the commentary. As will be clear from the Ovid commentaries below, the *accessus* tradition is undeniably important for what it reveals about audience, medieval literary theory, and medieval perceptions of a classical author's *intenciones*, but at times the commentary which follows does not adhere to the principles or *intenciones* the *accessus* marks out. As Parker has observed, "the very form of explication in the commentary—a line-by-line analysis—leads to a fragmented, topical response to the poem which is very different from the more unified conception of commentary projected by the *accessus*."[9] Parker also discusses another aspect of commentaries which is borne out in the case of the *Metamorphoses* commentaries like those found in "Vulgate," Thomas Walsingham, Raphael Regius, and Jacob Pontanus: the dialogic nature of medieval commentaries, drawing as they do on previous traditions of exegesis:

> One of the most common features of commentary is its cumulative nature, the way in which individual expositions tend to conserve traces of readings and interpretive procedures that have been developed over time. But the practice of recording various opinions . . . provides more than a historical record for later critics; such a continuous aggregation of opinion functions as a kind of collective memory from which they can draw old readings or interpretive procedures and employ them in constructing new interpretations.[10]

Frank Coulson comments on this phenomenon in the case of the thirteenth-century "Vulgate" commentary on the *Metamorphoses*, one

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[7] William J. Kennedy, *Authorizing Petrarch* (Ithaca, 1994), 27–28.

[8] Parker, *Commentary and Ideology: Dante in the Renaissance*, 159.

[9] Ibid., 39. Parker's comments here apply to the medieval commentary tradition in general, not just to the later reception of Dante. See also Hexter, *Ovid and Medieval Schooling*, 163, for his discussion of medieval *accessus* to Ovid's *Epistulae heroidum.*

[10] Parker, *Commentary and Ideology*, 40.

of the most important in the Middle Ages. At times the "Vulgate" commentator will "juxtapose two glosses which either repeat the same information or stand in contradiction to one another," thus illustrating part of his method of compiling earlier glosses. But this commentator "also adds a strata of comment which may be considered unique and original... dealing with the literary features of the epic... not attested in the earlier sources from which the 'Vulgate' draws."[11] Indeed, in the "Vulgate" and many later commentaries, it is possible to see an active "dialogue" in the folios of the manuscript or printed edition, in which several contrasting commentaries sit in close proximity to one another.

Suzanne Reynolds has shown that medieval Latin commentaries on classical texts (those generally called school texts) often involved a literal reading of individual lines because such commentaries had a fundamentally pedagogical purpose: the teacher would parse and explicate individual lines and words for his students, who might then imitate certain passages of the author's work as a means of not only mastering Latin but gaining a greater familiarity with the classical poet's style.[12] Medieval and Renaissance Latin editions of the *Metamorphoses* with accompanying marginal commentary illustrate Reynolds' observations; furthermore, many of their glosses fall within her rubrics, such as lexical, syntactical, and commentary.[13] Beyond the specific categories these glosses belong to within Reynolds' taxonomy, such marginal and interlinear comments may also yield important and useful information about medieval constructions of the feminine.

Glosses accompanying Latin editions of the *Metamorphoses*, such as the glosses in the "Vulgate," Raphael Regius, and Jacob Pontanus, because they have a pedagogical function and often provide explanation of individual words or phrases, do not always carry a moralizing signification. While this is true, it does not mean that such non-moralizing comments have a "grade zero" of hermeneutic value, that they are somehow therefore free of cultural inflection or valence. Jerome McGann argues that all literary texts, including glosses, have inflections which are recoverable only as we "take careful account

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[11] Frank T. Coulson, "The 'Vulgate' Commentary on Ovid's *Metamorphoses*," *Mediaevalia* 13 (1987), 30, 32.

[12] Suzanne Reynolds, *Medieval Reading: Grammar, Rhetoric, and the Classical Text* (Cambridge, 1996), 29.

[13] Ibid., 29–31.

of all contextual factors that impinge on the critical act"; but for McGann, the histories that we seek thus to recover are not only literary.[14] McGann and McKenzie have contributed much to our understanding of the intersections of history, literature, and textual history, what McKenzie issues as a call for a "sociology of texts."[15] Literal and grammatical glosses on classical poetry can also reveal much about the nature of medieval pedagogy; the absence itself of moralizing comment—or its relegation to the top or bottom margins—is significant, for in its place another hermeneutic is offered, one that engages the text's meanings in wholly other ways. A benefit of the literal line-by-line explication so common in classical schooltexts is that as male students were learning about the heroines in Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, what they were copying down in their own notes (or hearing, at the very least) were—in the case of the widely-used "Vulgate" edition—comments reflecting recognition of Ovid's development of the heroine's psychological complexity.[16] I do not wish to imply that any one of the commentators was a proto-feminist, but that at times in the pages of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, the construction of the feminine mediated to male students was free of a polarizing hermeneutic; this has important implications for the ways in which male students in both the Middle Ages and early modern period were being taught (however indirectly) to think about the feminine. It is clear that they were not, in every case, being indoctrinated with a type of automatic *in bono/in malo* perspective on the feminine.[17] Other versions of the *Metamorphoses* (including moralizing and non-moralizing summaries), while technically not "school texts," probably had some pedagogic use. In analyzing the specific content of commentaries from Fulgentius through the early seventeenth century, I have found a more complex picture of the reception of Ovid's heroines than the prevailing conventional wisdom about medieval clerical

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[14] Jerome McGann, *The Beauty of Inflections: Literary Investigations in Historical Method & Theory* (Oxford, 1985), 64, 25.

[15] McKenzie, *Bibliography and the Sociology of Texts*, 14–16.

[16] Reynolds discusses the practice of students writing notes down onto wax tablets and/or being required to memorize what had been learned for the next day (*Medieval Reading*, 29).

[17] In other means and through other texts, male (and later, female) students were no doubt introduced to praise/blame hermeneutics applied to the feminine; however, it is important to recognize the other ways female characters in classical texts were being "read" for pupils in these periods.

discourse on the feminine would allow. Greater latitude is needed as we approach the considerable body of commentaries on Ovid.

Recent scholarship has illustrated the misogyny which was often a feature of medieval clerical discourse concerning women.[18] Many medieval commentators reflect this antifeminist perspective, but also the tendency to read the feminine through the "Bride of Christ"/ "Devil's Gateway"[19] polarity immortalized by Tertullian. However, it is an unfortunate practice of modern scholarship to rely on conventional wisdom in this area rather than to investigate very far to test out these "truths." Therefore what is *common* in medieval clerical writings—binary representations of the feminine—is too often presented only as polarities.[20] A recent study argues that, if twelfth-century Latin was predominantly the language of patriarchy, some twelfth-century Latin works interrogate or dissent against that monologic model which privileges the masculine.[21] Barbara Newman objects to the tendency of modern scholars (including theologians, church historians, and feminists) to rely on "the old binary grid" in studies of medieval religion and gender. As an example of the way one might dichotomize regarding medieval religious women, she offers the formulation, "[is this] ventriloquized patriarchal ideology or protofeminist revolt?" As Newman recognizes, "the question is, within its own frame of reference, a valid one that has given rise to much useful analysis."[22] But her own research has led her to find such alternatives finally inadequate to represent the full range of religious

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[18] R. Howard Bloch, *Medieval Misogyny and the Invention of Western Romantic Love* (Chicago, 1991), 31–35, provides an overview. See also Blamires, *Woman Defamed and Woman Defended*, 2. Also, generally, Brown, *The Body and Society*.

[19] See Elizabeth Clark, "Devil's Gateway and the Brides of Christ: Women in the Early Christian World," in *Ascetic Piety & Women's Faith: Essays on Late Ancient Christianity* (Lewiston, N.Y, 1986), 23–60; also Bloch, *Medieval Misogyny*, chapter 3.

[20] See, for example, Jacques Dalarun, "The Clerical Gaze," in *A History of Women in the West: Silences of the Middle Ages*, ed. Christiane Klapisch-Zuber (Cambridge, 1992), 15–27; Diana Robin, ed., *Cassandra Fedele: Letters and Orations* (Chicago, 2000), xii; Blamires, *Woman Defamed and Woman Defended*, 12–13; Carolyn Dinshaw, *Chaucer's Sexual Poetics* (Madison, 1989), 19, 25; Renate Bridenthal, Claudia Koonz, and Susan Stuard, eds., *Becoming Visible: Women in European History*, 2nd ed., (Boston, 1987), 5, 165, 166. Dyan Elliot, *Fallen Bodies: Pollution, Sexuality, and Demonology in the Middle Ages* (Philadelphia, 1998), 32, 114–15, 123, discusses medieval polarizing views of women in terms of the psychoanalytic process of "splitting."

[21] David Townsend and Andrew Taylor, eds., *The Tongue of the Fathers: Gender and Ideology in Twelfth-Century Latin* (Philadelphia, 1998).

[22] Barbara Newman, *From Virile Woman to Woman Christ: Studies in Medieval Religion and Literature* (Philadelphia, 1995), 245.

women's experience as reflected in medieval texts. Binary approaches are ultimately short-sighted and misleading whether applied to women in the Middle Ages, or to clerics who thought and wrote about the feminine. Such dichotomizing methods enable scholars to comfortably domesticate an often unruly complex of histories which we call the "medieval past"; yet polarizing approaches create mythologies that only further blind us to these histories, already so difficult to recover. "Habits of thought"[23] is useful as a way of characterizing the medieval clerical polarizing hermeneutic: while there is no doubt that Church fathers and later medieval authors participated *at times* in these "habits of thought," this binary rhetoric does not by itself exhaust the ways in which the feminine was read within commentaries, in the case of Ovid at least, between 1100 and 1618. Some commentaries do seem to participate in this binary view of the feminine. Yet other voices from the Middle Ages, and other ways of reading Ovid's heroines, deserve to be heard.

Medieval clerical discourse should not be stereotyped as it often is on the question of the feminine.[24] Several examples here of recent research illustrate the range of ways in which medieval clerics might characterize the feminine, above and beyond the more familiar Eve/Mary polarity, which is a common structure. Felice Lifshitz shows that in eighth-century sermons and saints' lives east of the middle Rhine, for example, one can see a wide range of treatments. Gregory

[23] Debora Shuger, *Habits of Thought in the English Renaissance: Religion, Politics, and the Dominant Culture* (Toronto, 1997); the phrase does not originate with Shuger, but her use of it has influenced my own thinking. I have adapted this phrase for my own arguments; Shuger's use of this expression, in relation to modes of thought in early modern England, has a wider application than gender.

[24] Helen Solterer, *The Master and Minerva: Disputing Women in French Medieval Culture* (Berkeley, 1995), illustrates a common propensity in recent criticism to present medieval masculine clerical discourse an unvariegated discourse of total dominance and mastery in its relation to the feminine, illustrated by a generally undifferentiated usage of "clerk." Solterer's study provides fascinating evidence for the representation of the disputing female character. However, she also refers to Ovidian and Aristotelian models of mastery (34, 42), basing her argument for the Ovidian model of mastery only on the *Ars Amatoria*, which though very influential on vernacular literature, appears to have been much less frequently taught and/or read by clerics than the *Metamorphoses*. Eva Matthew Sanford, in her "The Use of Classical Authors in the *Libri Manuales*," 190–248, shows that between the ninth and thirteenth centuries, the *Metamorphoses* was represented twice as often as the *Ars Amatoria*; Sanford's findings are corroborated by my own (in the case of surviving or recorded copies of Ovid's works), in "Manuscripts of Ovid in England 1100–1500," Table 1.

the Great offers a variety of readings of the feminine in his homilies, often depending upon the particular occasion in the liturgical year.[25] Elizabeth van Houts establishes, for the period 900–1200, the frequent collaboration in Western Europe of male clerics and women in the writing of saints' lives, chronicles, and letters; her study demonstrates not only how integral a part women played in the work of medieval memory but also often how grateful male clerics were for their contributions.[26] In his study of the medieval reception of Ovid's *Heroides* and amatory works, Ralph Hexter has shown that the earlier, pre-thirteenth-century school commentaries are "surprising in the relative scarcity—in fact . . . the total absence—of allegorizing and Christianizing comment."[27] The absence of such comment often also eliminates some antifeminist sentiment, a fact borne out in medieval and early modern commentaries on the *Metamorphoses.* Hexter also sheds light on the clerics who both wrote and read Ovid commentaries; in the *finalis causa* of an *accessus* to a twelfth-century manuscript of Ovid's *Heroides*, the commentator states that we can learn from the illicit love affairs in the *Heroides*: "soli casto adhereamus"[28] (that we may cling to chaste love alone). In the context the commentator does not appear to be counseling a type only of spiritual love, celibacy and love for God alone, but rather "legitimate" ("legitimito") love, presumably marriage. As Hexter points out, "While the readers of the texts would have been clerics, not all clerics would have been in orders or ordained as priests. Moreover, the question of priestly celibacy was being hotly debated during this period."[29] Although clerics who married were not inevitably free from negative perspectives on women, what this twelfth-century comment does reveal is that the audience for such a work was not necessarily the caste of celibate (and thus misogynist, according to conventional wisdom) monks sometimes assumed. Sharon Farmer has also shown that

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[25] Felice Lifshitz, "Gender and Exemplarity East of the Middle Rhine: Jesus, Mary and the Saints in Manuscript Context," *Early Medieval Europe* 9 (2000), forthcoming.

[26] Elizabeth van Houts, *Memory and Gender in Medieval Europe 900–1200* (Toronto, 1999).

[27] Hexter, *Ovid and Medieval Schooling*, 11.

[28] Ibid., 158. Hexter cites R. B. C. Huygens, ed., *Accessus ad auctores, Bernard d'Utrecht, Conrad d'Hirsau "Dialogus super Auctores"* (Leiden, 1970), 30; fol. 1rb.

[29] Hexter, *Ovid and Medieval Schooling*, 158.

in thirteenth-century France, cleric Thomas of Chobham offered "endorsement of woman's speech";[30] he and other clerics viewed feminine speech as a unique vehicle of divine grace. Farmer's research shows that, between the eleventh and thirteenth centuries, there was a counter-tradition to the tradition of feminine speech as deception.[31] Caroline Walker Bynum has demonstrated the importance of maternal imagery in Cistercian writings describing Jesus and the love of God. Among the medieval and early modern commentaries in this study (many of which contain moralizations), there are cases in which Ovid's heroines and their quandaries are regarded by individual commentators with interest, even at times apparent sympathy or admiration. In the discussion of Ovid commentaries which follows, I am not interested in rescuing medieval clerical commentators from their all too well-established participation in the Eve/Mary dichotomy, but I wish to show that they sometimes had other things to say about female characters. For the sake of coherence in comparing the *Metamorphoses* commentaries below, I have limited my analysis to the Medea story of book 7 and two sections of book 10: the developing tradition on the Orpheus story which opens the book, and the constellation of Pygmalion/Myrrha/Atalanta myths near the book's close.

Fulgentius (467–532 A.D.), Mythologiae

Although many medieval commentators drew on Fulgentius' readings of classical myths, Fulgentius' work does not constitute commentary *per se* on Ovid's poem. Nevertheless, while this is true, it is useful for the sake of situating the style and method of later commentaries in a historical context, to provide as an illustration his reading of the Orpheus story which begins book 10:

> Orpheus Euridicem nimfam amavit; quam sono citharae mulcens uxorem duxit. Hanc Aristeus pastor dum amans sequitur, illa fugiens in serpentem incidit et mortua est. Post quam maritus ad inferos descendit

[30] Sharon Farmer, "Persuasive Voices: Clerical Images of Medieval Wives" *Speculum* 61 (1986), 542.

[31] Thomas' project was not entirely free of antifeminist sentiment; he encouraged wives to use "feminine enticements, and even deceit in their attempts to influence and correct the moral and economic behavior of their husbands" (517). Nevertheless, his and other clerics' otherwise positive regard of feminine discourse is striking for the period.

et legem accepit, ne eam conversus aspiceret; quam/conversus et aspiciens iterum perdidit. Haec igitur fabula artis est musicae designatio. Orpheus [enim] dicitur oreafone, id est//optima vox, Euridice vero profunda dijudicatio. In omnibus igitur artibus sunt primae artes, sunt secundae; ut in puerilibus litteris prima abecetaria, secunda nota, in grammaticis prima lectio, secunda articulatio, in rethoricis prima rethorica, secunda dialectica . . .

Orpheus loved the nymph Eurydice; wooing her with the sound of the lyre he married her. The shepherd Aristaeus, desiring her, followed her; she, fleeing, fell upon a snake and died. Her husband descended into the underworld after her and accepted the condition that he not look back upon her; turning and looking at her he lost her again. This story therefore designates the art of music. For Orpheus means mouth's voice, that is the best voice, but Euridice, wise judgment. Therefore in all of the arts there are the principal skills, [then] there are the secondary; as in the education of children first elementary instruction, second the written characters, in grammar first reading, then pronunciation, in rhetoric first rhetoric, then dialectic . . . III.x[32]

Fulgentius here employs an etymological reading of the myth, going on to enumerate other subjects within the medieval quadrivium, likewise classified into two-fold hierarchies for which the figures Orpheus and Eurydice function as a paradigm. Fulgentius' source for the Orpheus story here is most likely Virgil's *Georgics* 4.454–59, since Ovid does not include the Aristaeus detail. Later commentators would incorporate these Fulgentian/Virgilian readings in their own commentaries on Ovid's passage, thus illustrating the mixing of streams which ensued in successive commentaries. In any case, it is clear that for this commentator the myth can be interpreted for its artistic and didactic significations. Fulgentius offers a positive etymological reading of Eurydice here, unlike some subsequent commentators, for whom Eurydice's descent to the underworld is tied to an inclination toward the flesh and the things of this world.[33] Fulgentius'

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[32] Fulgentius, *Mitologiarum. Opera*, ed. Rudolfus Helm (Leipzig, 1898). The translation for this and the other excerpts from commentaries is my own, except where noted; I have altered punctuation at times to clarify the sense of the passage.

[33] For a discussion of commentators' readings of Orpheus from Fulgentius through the Renaissance, see John B. Friedman, *Orpheus in the Middle Ages* (Cambridge, 1970). See Minnis, *Medieval Literary Theory*, for his analysis of Orpheus in William of Aragon's and Nicholas Trevet's commentaries on Boethius (314–16, 318–21). Winthrop Wetherbee, *Platonism and Poetry in the Twelfth Century: The Literary Influence of the School of Chartres* (Princeton, 1972) discusses the treatment of Orpheus in Guillaume de Conches' commentary on Boethius and in the twelfth-century poem, "Parce continuis" (96–104).

reading is in general striking by contrast to the later commentaries, beginning with Arnulf, for its lack of moralization.

Oxford, Bodleian Auctarium F.4.30 (12th century)

An incomplete copy of the *Metamorphoses* written in either England[34] or France in the middle of the twelfth century, this manuscript offers an early, albeit brief commentary on the contradictory emotions evinced in the Ovidian heroine's monologue. The manuscript appears to have been a school text because of the scholastic glosses which are found throughout monologues; both the text of the poem and these glosses are written in the same hand. The other comments contemporary to the text itself, which appear in the margins of this manuscript, are not moralizations but often explanations of mythological backgrounds or locations. As Medea vacillates in her feelings for and against Jason, the scribe has classified her soliloquy into the categories of "amor" and "ratio" in marginal and interlinear glosses in book 7, lines 23–69 (fols. 21v and 22r), in a total of ten places.[35] This opposition was well in place in classical rhetoric and, as we have seen, is part of Ovid's own vocabulary for describing the heroine's quandary ("et luctata diu, postquam ratione furorem/vincere non poterat"; 7.9–11). There was evidently some interest in analysis (rhetorical, if not psychological) in the shifts of Medea's thoughts in this passage. The commentator also classifies Pygmalion's transformation, such as it is, in book 10. In many medieval manuscripts of the *Metamorphoses*, there are brief marginal annotations indicating the type of metamorphosis, usually "x in y," that is, "x [turns] into y." The marginal annotation for the Pygmalion episode is "Pygmalion in vecordem amorem" (Pygmalion [is transformed] into maddened love; fol. 33r). In book 10, the commentator shows further attention

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[34] Although the provenance is difficult to determine, Dr. Teresa Webber's assessment is "perhaps English" (personal communication). See also Birger Munk Olsen, *L'Étude des Auteurs Classiques Latins aux XI^e et XII Siècles*, vol. 2 (Paris, 1985), 153 (C.102); McKinley, "Manuscripts of Ovid in England 1100–1500," 79.

[35] The notations are as follows: *ratio*, line 23 over *hoc; amor*, line 25 over *vivat tum; ratio*, line 35 next to *Cur; amor*, line 37 next to *dii meliora; ratio*, line 38 over *Prodamne; amor*, line 43 over *Sed non hic vultus in illo; ratio*, at line 51 (*germanam*); *amor*, line 53, next to *nempe; ratio*, line 62 next to *quid quod nescio; amor*, line 65, next to line beginning *Scilla.*

to the heroine's deliberations, by providing interlinear glosses in Myrrha's monologue, again marking "amor" and "ratio" at the turns of Myrrha's thought (fol. 34r; *Metamorphoses* 10.323–345).[36] In the "Vulgate" commentary written approximately a century later, we see a similar fascination with the interior landscape of the heroine, and similarly marked attention to Medea's monologue and her flight. The *amor/ratio* glosses in MS Auct. F.4.30 suggest that the speeches of Ovid's heroines had a pedagogic value; such careful demarcations reflect not the responses of a private reader but rather the lecture-notes of a teacher, perhaps of rhetoric. The shifts from love to rationality might be seen to illustrate the unstable nature of woman, but no such commentary appears. Furthermore, in the high and later Middle Ages, when women's intellectual capacity was deemed weaker than men's, it is somewhat striking to see a female character repeatedly accredited with "ratio," the power of reason and logic so central to the effective oration. From the twelfth through seventeenth centuries, when it was applied in the classroom to the speeches of Ovid's heroines, rhetoric offered a means to project an alternate view of the feminine: one linking feminine speech with acts of deliberation, judgment, and fine discrimination. Ovid's fascination with situations requiring such intellectual, ethical, and moral deliberations, and his use of the female character to explore them, resulted in a series of representations of the feminine in which the presence of complex rationality could not be denied. MS Auct. F.4.30 illustrates the beginning of a tradition of commentary on the Ovidian heroine that would gain momentum in the later Middle Ages and proliferate in the early modern period.

Arnulf of Orléans, Allegoriae *(c. 1175)*

Arnulf of Orléans, the first known commentator on Ovid's *Metamorphoses* in the high Middle Ages, initiated the allegorical, moralizing tradition of reading the *Metamorphoses.* The "Vulgate" Latin commentary on the *Metamorphoses,* composed between 1240–50 also in the Loire Valley

[36] The notations are here: *ratio,* line 335 over *iniusta revolvor* [*sic*]; *amor* at the end of line 336 (*dignus amari*); *amor,* line 339, over *Nunc . . . iam; ratio,* line 341, over *Ire libet procul; amor,* line 342, over *retinet; ratio,* line 345, over *Ultra; amor,* line 355, over *o vellem.*

(perhaps at Orléans), and the *Ovide moralisé*, written by 1328, contain numerous excerpts from Arnulf's commentary. As Orléans will be the geographical origin of three of the Ovid commentaries in this study (those of Arnulf, William, and the "Vulgate" commentator), it may be useful to consider here the importance of this city in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries as a center of classical learning. R. H. Rouse has shown that many twelfth- and early thirteenth-century authors, including Matthew of Vendôme, Alexander Neckham, Geoffrey of Vinsauf, Eberhard of Béthune, and Henry of Andely, attested to Orléans' reputation "as a school for the study of Latin classical authors."[37] In the twelfth century especially the city was famed for its teaching of the classics (then classified as grammar); Hastings Rashdall observes that "at the school of Orléans were educated the classical commentators, the professional letter-writers, and the versifiers of the twelfth century."[38] Although in the thirteenth century the school became known for legal studies, Rashdall shows that "there lingered down to at least the middle of the thirteenth century the classical traditions of the age of Bernard and John of Salisbury."[39] In 1234, from the University of Paris John of Garland, in his *Ars lectoria ecclesiae*, appealed to Orléans: "Vos deus elegit, per quos fundamina firma/Astent eloquii studio succurrere, cujus/Fundamenta labant" (God has chosen you, through whom the firm foundations stand, to aid the study of eloquence, whose foundations are now giving way).[40]

Both Arnulf of Orléans and John of Garland, who refashion the *Metamorphoses* through Christianizing allegory, tend to transmit a rather limited construction of the feminine, and of gender in general. The popular allegorizations they initiated with Ovid's poem may reflect something of the anxiety of the period as it attempted to legitimize

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37 R. H. Rouse, "Florilegia and Latin Classical Authors in Twelfth- and Thirteenth-Century Orléans" *Viator* 10 (1979), 131; see also Berthe M. Marti, "Hugh Primas and Arnulf of Orléans," *Speculum* 30 (1955), 235.

38 Hastings Rashdall, *The Universities of Europe in the Middle Ages*, eds. F. M. Powicke and A. B. Emden (Oxford, 1936), 2. 141.

39 Ibid.; it may be worth noting that the monastery of Fleury, near to Orléans, had also been widely known for its classical texts. See Marco Mostert, "The Tradition of Classical Texts in the Manuscripts of Fleury," *Medieval Manuscripts of the Latin Classics: Production and Use*, eds. Claudine A. Chavannes-Mazel and Margaret M. Smith (Leiden, 1996), 19–40.

40 Louis Paetow, ed., *The Battle of the Seven Arts*, in *Memoirs of the University of California* 4.1 (1914), 18 n. 24.

the sometimes "dangerous" material of Ovid's poetry for their students (some married) and for what was presumably a largely clerical readership. If for some clerics the accommodation of this "pagan" author (who was, admittedly, no Virgil) presented its problems, the construction of the feminine which Ovid offers would have rankled sensibilities even further. In general, moralizing commentaries (more than the rest) tend to contain the feminine, to revert to the more limiting dichotomizing approach. Yet not all versions of Ovid's poem produced in France at this period take this approach. Nancy Partner discusses the way in which even the "best work" in constructivist theory is ultimately reductive: "sexual players (interchangeably human and literary) reenact in stylized erotic mime the class, gender, and economic hierarchies of the larger society. . . . The opaque and mysterious quality that clings to human sexuality is exorcised and replaced by the simpler cruelties of privilege and domination."[41] In contrast, the constellation of Arnulf, William of Orléans, John of Garland, and the "Vulgate" commentator—all writing their commentaries within approximately seventy-five years (1175–1250) in France, and most at Orléans—show that quite different approaches to the feminine can be expressed, even within the same "institution of cultural power," the university. Some editions of the *Metamorphoses* written in France from the period, with accompanying glosses, show a striking interest in the Ovidian heroine and her subjectivity; moralizing commentaries, on the other hand, do tend to silence or limit her speech, and the ways that she may evoke aspects of human sexuality.

Arnulf wrote commentaries on Ovid's *Ars Amatoria, Remedia Amoris, Ex Ponto, Fasti, Heroides*, and *Tristia*, in addition to his allegorizing commentary on the *Metamorphoses*, the *Allegoriae super Ovidii Metamorphosin*.[42] Arnulf's program with the *Allegoriae*, as he states at the opening of each book, is to render Ovid's myths "modo quasdam allegorice, quasdam moraliter, et quasdam historice" (some allegorically, some

[41] Nancy Partner, "No Sex, No Gender," *Studying Medieval Women: Sex, Gender, Feminism*, ed. Nancy Partner (Cambridge, 1993), 124, 125.

[42] See Arnulf of Orléans, *Allegoriae*, in *Arnolfo d'Orléans, un cultore di Ovidio nel secolo XII*, ed. Fausto Ghisalberti, *Memorie del Reale Istituto lombardo di scienze e lettere*, 24 (1932), 157–234; also Bruno Roy, "Arnulf of Orleans and the Latin 'Comedy'" *Speculum* 49 (1974), 258–66. Arnulf also wrote a philological commentary on the *Metamorphoses*; see further Frank Coulson and Krysztof Nawotka, "The Rediscovery of Arnulf of Orléans' Glosses to Ovid's Creation Myth" *Classica et Mediaevalia* 44 (1993): 267–99.

morally, and some historically).[43] For book 7 of the *Metamorphoses*, Arnulf records in detail all of the transformations; but despite Medea's featured role in this book, her name is not mentioned once, as is Scylla's or Atalanta's in his analysis of later books. In fact, Arnulf's assessment at the opening of book 7 begins with the "mutationes" of the dragon's teeth into armed soldiers, suggesting that Medea was not as integral to Arnulf's analysis of transformations since, unlike Scylla and Atalanta, Medea herself never undergoes metamorphosis. Arnulf followed the lead of "Lactantius"' *Narrationes*, summaries of the *Metamorphoses*' fables; the author of the *Narrationes* himself refers to Medea's own situation only briefly in his summary of book 7.[44]

In his reading of the Orpheus story in *Allegoriae* book 10, Arnulf retains some of Fulgentius' etymological reading but replaces his discussion on medieval schooling with a moralized reading of the myth. The *loci* of the myth take on a spiritual import, with the pagan underworld assuming the characteristics of the Christian Hell; the meadow, the allurements of the world; and the mountain, the higher spiritual realms. Furthermore, Arnulf recasts the myth so that it teaches the importance of refraining from temptations and vices. Eurydice plays an ambivalent role in Arnulf's reading: while she initially represents, as in Fulgentius, good judgment, her stroll through the meadow comes to signify her immersion in worldly pleasure, a behavioral tendency which makes her partly responsible for her own death.[45] When Arnulf describes Eurydice's descent to the underworld he expresses a common view of women in relation to sin: "Mulieres siquidem proniores sunt in libidinem et vicia quam viri" (women are indeed more prone to sin and vice than are men; X.1). To make this statement Arnulf (as with many later commentators) recasts the myth to obfuscate Orpheus' homosexual behavior after the loss of his wife, a detail present in most classical accounts of the myth. Here, instead, when Orpheus transfers his love to men, Arnulf interprets "mares" (men) as "viriliter agentes," those acting in a manly

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[43] Arnulf of Orléans, *Allegoriae*, ed. Ghisalberti.

[44] "Lactantius," *Narrationes Lactantii*, in *P. Ovidii Nasonis Metamorphoseon libri XV*, ed. H. Magnus (Berlin, 1914), 667–68. See also Brooks Otis, "The Argumenta of the so-called Lactantius," *Harvard Studies in Classical Philology* 47 (1936), 131–63; Hexter, "Medieval Articulations of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*," 69.

[45] See Minnis, *Medieval Literary Theory*, for a discussion of Eurydice's fortunes at the hands of a variety of medieval commentators (320).

way, that is to say, acting virtuously. Here Orpheus' less palatable sexual preferences are sanitized to conform to Arnulf's sexual economy.

Arnulf's handling of the Myrrha myth (X.10–11) illustrates other aspects of his three-fold method in the *Allegoriae*: here he applies a naturalistic, literal (i.e. *historice*) reading of the myth to explain the nature of the myrrh-tree and the sap it sheds, a version of the story taken largely from Fulgentius' *Mythologiae* III.x. Absent in Arnulf's reading of the myth is any moral assessment of the incest itself. In the Atalanta *fabula* which follows, Arnulf provides both etymological and allegorical readings. First he parses their names: *Atalanta* signifies "Plena levitate" (full of lightness); and *Hippomenes*, "equus manens [id est] ad modum equi velox" (horse that endures, that is, swift in the manner of a horse). He then expatiates upon the three apples which Venus gave Hippomenes to divert Atalanta's attentions during the race and decrease her speed: "Tria Veneris poma sunt sapientia, pulcritudo, nobilitas quibus circa Ipomanes [sic]consideratis se ab illo vinci permisit" (Venus' three apples are wisdom, beauty, nobility; having weighed these carefully with regard to Hippomenes, she allowed herself to be beaten by him). Arnulf's participle *consideratis* is the closest we come to any overt recognition of Atalanta's own inner quandary over Hippomenes, so elaborately explored in Ovid; even so it is dispensed with in one word. Yet Arnulf's reading of Atalanta credits her with good judgment in her decision to allow Hippomenes to win the race, unlike, for example, the *Ovide moralisé*, which will see Atalanta distracted by sin. In his summary of the temple episode, however, Arnulf passes over Hippomenes' forgetfulness, the cause for Venus' wrath and punishment; the narrative moves from Hippomenes' victory in the race to the couple's desecration of the temple. In Arnulf's version, Hippomenes and Atalanta bear equal responsibility for the offense which causes their transformation into lions. Thus Arnulf exculpates Hippomenes; but he also represents Atalanta favorably earlier through his allegorization of the golden apples as the youth's inner virtues which caused her to give in to love. With Eurydice Arnulf draws on the clerical tradition that women are more prone to sin, as a way of interpreting her ultimate fall backwards into Hades; yet with Atalanta, Arnulf characterizes her foresight and intelligence in positive ways. Through Arnulf's readings of these myths, it is possible to see a sampling of the interpretive approaches which he takes toward the feminine in the *Allegoriae*, as well as the methodological ground he lays for later commentaries.

In the case of Arnulf, John of Garland, and later the *Ovide moralisé*, it seems that the hermeneutic which often silences or otherwise sanitizes the feminine, serves the larger purpose of authorizing certain "specific understandings of textual meaning as official or legitimate."[46]

John of Garland, Integumenta Ovidii, *c. 1234*

John of Garland, the thirteenth-century English master who was trained at Oxford but went to live and teach in Paris, wrote a highly-condensed verse allegorization of the *Metamorphoses*, which often accompanied Arnulf's *Allegoriae* in medieval manuscripts of Ovid's poem.[47] Garland himself was "a most ardent exponent" of the cult of the Virgin, and wrote a 6,000-line poem, *Epithalamium B. Marie Virginis*, which he "considered his masterpiece."[48] Between 1229 and 1232, when lectures at the University of Paris were halted because of student riots, Garland taught at the newly-formed University of Toulouse, but Louis Paetow believes that Garland's return to Paris in 1232 may have been occasioned by his somewhat "unusual ideas about Aristotelian science and the works of pagan classical authors," which would not have made him especially welcome with the "Dominican inquisitors who now took full charge in Toulouse."[49] Garland's other views show him to be fairly conservative: in his works he constantly rails against infidels and heretics. Garland's position on the subject of rhetoric, however, is most telling vis à vis his method of reading Ovid's works. As we have seen, in 1234 Garland lamented the decline of rhetoric as a discipline at the University of Paris; by 1241 he was still defending it as a discipline there: "Parisius pono Romam, martis quia cono/Eloquiique sono nitet, etheris ardua dono" (I place Paris above Rome because Paris is resplendent with the battle of the schools, namely with disputations, and with the sound of eloquence,

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[46] Kennedy, *Authorizing Petrarch*, 28.

[47] Coulson, *The "Vulgate" Commentary on Ovid's "Metamorphoses,"* 6 n. 17; see also Lester K. Born, "The Manuscripts of the *Integumenta* on the *Metamorphoses* of Ovid by John of Garland" *Transactions of the American Philological Association* 60 (1929): 179–99.

[48] Louis Paetow, "*Morale Scolarium* of John of Garland," *Memoirs of the University of California* 4.2 (1927), 114.

[49] Ibid., 92.

and is lofty with the gift of the holy spirit; *Morale Scolarium* 23.487–88).[50] Garland's *Morale Scolarium*, written in 1241, also sheds interesting light on at least some of the potential students of his *Integumenta*. In the *Morale Scolarium* Garland advises his students to love their wives: "Non tibi captetur meretrix, uxor set ametur;/Omnis honoretur set plus que pluris habetur" (Don't be caught by the prostitute, but love your wife; let every wife be honored, but even more a wife of virtue; 30.579–80).[51] Garland's male pupils would learn related lessons about the feminine when studying Ovid through the *Integumenta Ovidii*.

The *Integumenta Ovidii*, which Paetow believes to have been composed in 1234, may have been used, if not written, for pedagogical purposes, and for the moral instruction of students.[52] Paetow speaks of the "fanciful character of this curious commentary on Ovid."[53] In the opening of Garland's poem, he presents the types of transformations his poem includes: "Ars et natura, typus et magus" (artificial, natural, typical, and magical; I.11). The *accessus* of different manuscripts of the poem provide an array of other types, including *spiritualis* and *moralis*. He thus adds "ars" and "typus" to Arnulf's triad, *naturalis*, *magica*, and *spiritualis*, as approaches to interpreting the poem's myths. In his treatment of Medea in book 7, Garland differs from Arnulf. Far from avoiding Medea's name, Garland opens his verse summary of the book with "Auratum vellus Medeam dicimus ipsam/ Auro preda fuit hec speciosa magis" (we say that Medea herself was the golden fleece;/she was a booty that glittered more than gold; 7. 297). Here Garland represents Medea as a glittering prize, a type of faint praise suggesting Jason's perception of her as a useful means to his own ends (escape from death; power; and ultimately kingship). Garland goes on to attribute all of Jason's victories to Medea and her *ars*, however unreliable such skill may be in the end.

Garland renders the whole of book 10 in this elliptical way:

> Pratum delicie, coniunx caro, vipera virus,
> Vir ratio, Stix est terra, loquela lira.

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[50] Ibid; I draw on Paetow's translation here, 172.

[51] Ibid., 245–46.

[52] Ibid., 109; Fausto Ghisalberti, ed., *Integumenta Ovidii* (Milan, 1933), 19. The work may have been composed partly for its utility as a memory aid; Ghisalberti speaks of "il distico memoriale."

[53] Paetow, *Morale Scolarium*, 118.

Morphosis Ovidii conformi nomine facta
Consimilique statu proprietate pari.
Sic tibi Iacinctus flos est Cyparissus et arbor,
Taurus crudelis, bos meretricis amor.
Rem miram mirare novam Mirram per amorem
In mirram verti quam dat amarus amor.
Ex auro poma tria sunt genitalia, fervens
Cum leo luxuries, fertur uterque leo.
Nobilitas, species, sapientia sunt tria poma
Aurea, que triplici pectora dote trahunt.
Flos breviter durans iuvenilis dicitur etas
Que cito discedens ut levis umbra fugit.[54]

The meadow is allurements; wife, flesh; snake, poison;
Man, reason; the Styx, earth; the lyre, speech.
Ovid's *Transformations* suit the name to the deed,
and with similar state equal appropriateness.
Thus for you Hyacinthus is a flower and Cyparissus a tree,
the bull cruel, the cow a prostitute's lust.
A marvel: admire Myrrha through new love
turned into the myrrh which bitter love gives.
The three golden apples are the genitals; as a lion,
burning excess, and each is said to be a lion.
Nobility, beauty, wisdom are the three golden
apples, which draw hearts in a triple dowry.
The flower lasting briefly signifies youth
which quickly departing flees as a light shadow.

Garland here takes up Arnulf's moralization of the elements of the Orpheus/Eurydice episode, also emphasizing the spiritual significance of each locale. Orpheus himself and his own experience are virtually absent in the passage, except for "vir ratio" (man, reason) and "lira loquela" (lyre, speech; 408). Eurydice as wife is equated with flesh (a common pairing in clerical discourse) in the opening line. Passing over the bulk of the myths in Orpheus' song as examples of Ovid's correlation of metamorphosis to name, Garland devotes most of his attention to the Myrrha tale (413–14) and the myth of Atalanta and Hippomenes (415–18). Garland excludes the Pygmalion episode, despite its thematic and genealogical connections to the tale of Myrrha which follows. Garland does refer to the Pygmalion myth briefly in *Morale Scolarium* 17.429–30, however, when defending

[54] Ibid.

himself against his detractors. His defense shows Garland's tendency to polarize the feminine; here the person of Galatea represents intellectually respectable pursuits (what Paetow translates as "my pure muse"): "Me mordere meam gaudent propter Galatheam:/Absit quod teneam tamen infamem Cythercam!" (They love to gnash at me because of my Galatea:/but may I never embrace the infamous Venus!). In the *Integumenta*, however, the Pygmalion myth does not offer Garland material for moralization in the way that both the Myrrha and Atalanta stories, tales of sexual excess, do. Ovid's interest in juxtaposing aspects of two such adjoining tales is clearly not central to Garland, who includes only the material from *Metamorphoses* 10 which advances his own moralizing program in the *Integumenta*. Garland plays extensively with alliteration and polyptoton: "Rem miram mirare novam Mirram per amorem/In mirram verti quam dat amarus amor" (413–14). Also in these lines he employs anticlimax: opening with an ostensibly positive assessment of the Myrrha myth, as we marvel at Myrrha's new form, he ends with a statement on the bitterness love affords.

Garland gives the greatest attention to the myth of Atalanta and Hippomenes, in particular the details of the golden apples which enabled Hippomenes to slow Atalanta and beat her in the race, and also the detail of the lion (*Metamorphoses* 10.640–80; 686–704). Following their race, Atalanta and Hippomenes neglect to offer thanks to Venus who, angered with their impiety, afflicts Hippomenes with a passion for his wife; as they desecrate Cybele's temple by making love in it, Cybele transforms them into lions. Lions were often depicted in connection with Cybele; she alone was able to tame them.[55] Hippomenes' and Atalanta's excess of passion ("fervens/Cum leo luxuries" 415–16) is represented both by the golden apples (*genitalia*) and by the lion; and both Atalanta and Hippomenes become lions. As with many commentators, Garland accepts the goddesses' punishment on both lovers, despite Hippomenes' failure to thank Venus for her help. The transformation of Atalanta and Hippomenes fits within Garland's "typus" category; as an illustration of "tipice . . . mutatio" in the introductory lines of his poem he gives the following example: "vir leo

[55] *Ovid's "Metamorphoses,"* ed. Anderson, 523 n. 704. Anderson also observes that in other accounts of the myth, Atalanta and Hippomenes desecrate the shrine of Jupiter, who then transforms them.

factus est," (a man is turned into a lion; I.17–18). However, what Garland does explicitly say about Atalanta is affirmative: the apples can also represent the virtues by which Atalanta drew suitors. Here Garland reverses Arnulf's reading: while in Arnulf the three apples represent virtues through which Hippomenes attracts Atalanta, in Garland, the apples seem to refer instead to the heroine's own virtues, because of the reference to the three-fold dowry (*triplici . . . dote*) which they constitute. The "flower" of the final distich refers to the anemone, the flower into which youthful Adonis was transformed when he died, book 10's final metamorphosis. Taken together then, Garland's readings of book 10 here constitute a commentary on the dangers of worldly pleasures and excesses, and the transitory nature of youth. Garland's rendition of book 10 presents a number of generally inherited gendered readings: while the wife (Eurydice) is first equated with the flesh, later the golden apples represent the variety of Atalanta's own gifts; conversely, the "vir" is first synonymous with *ratio*, reason, but is later depicted as a lion for his indulgence in sexual excess with Atalanta in Cybele's temple. Myrrha is worthy of both admiration and pity; yet the sense of lines 413–14 becomes a casualty of the commentator's greater interest in rhetorical display. Garland's synopsis of book 10 offers representations of both masculine and feminine through the binary approach: alternatively good or evil. In his highly-compressed poem Garland instills polarizing gender distinctions partly through his use of rhetorical figures. The approach to Ovid through the discipline of rhetoric (with widely-differing results) is used in schools well up through the seventeenth century, as will be discussed further in the following chapter. While the *Integumenta* is not a line-by-line commentary as is that of the "Vulgate" commentator, it does offer one popular thirteenth-century rendition of Ovid's poem which falls within the moralistic, allegorizing tradition. The *Integumenta* also attests to the great popularity of the *Metamorphoses* in the high Middle Ages; by the thirteenth century Ovid's poem had spawned numerous progeny, including summaries and commentaries which circulated independently.

William of Orléans, Bursarii Ovidianorum

Another contemporary commentator on Ovid's works writing in Orléans, William influenced the later traditions with his literary and

literal early thirteenth-century glosses.[56] As Coulson points out, "William was foremost a philologist interested in the literal explication of the given text. Allegorical and moral interpretations of the myths, so strongly favoured by Arnulf, are studiously avoided for interests more exclusively grammatical in focus."[57] Orléans had been famous as early as 830 as a law school;[58] perhaps this tradition and orientation, which intensified in the thirteenth century, may shed some light on William's literal hermeneutic. Rashdall comments that "in the twelfth century . . . we hear most of the fame of Orleans as a school of grammar, rhetoric, and classical literature, subjects we must remember at that time more closely connected with legal studies than was the case in the later universities."[59] William's non-moralizing approach to exegesis can be further seen in his *accessus*, in which he offers a more secular reading of Ovid's purposes in writing poetry: the pursuit of honor. Although William clearly drew on Arnulf's glosses in some lines, William's own intentions as an exegete were far different from those of the earlier cleric and his "lofty vision of Ovid the moralist leading men's souls away from carnal lusts to spiritual concerns." Yet, as Coulson observes, William manifests a psychological interest in the life of Ovid as he presents it[60]—an interest in the psychological which resurfaces in his treatment of some Ovidian heroines. William's glosses, in their strikingly literal form, reflect another thirteenth-century pedagogical approach to Ovid's poem in Orléans, one emphasizing grammar and philology. This more literal approach to teaching and reading classical authors in the Middle Ages has been well demonstrated by Reynolds in the case of Horace, and it has important implications for our understanding of medieval ped-

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[56] See Hugues-V. Shooner, "Les *Bursarii Ovidianorum* de Guillaume d' Orléans," *Mediaeval Studies* 43 (1981): 405–24; Frank T. Coulson, "Hitherto Unedited Medieval and Renaissance Lives of Ovid (I)," *Mediaeval Studies* 49 (1987), 156; Wilken Engelbrecht, "'Bursarii Ovidianorum'—Ein Ovid-Kommentar des Wilhelm von Orleans (um 1200)," *Mittellateinisches Jahrbuch* 26 (1991), 357–58; also A. J. Minnis, "Latin to Vernacular: Academic Prologues and the Medieval French Art of Love," in *Medieval and Renaissance Scholarship: Proceedings of the Second European Science Foundation Workshop on the Classical Tradition in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance* (Leiden, 1997), 154–56.

[57] Coulson, "Hitherto Unedited Medieval and Renaissance Lives of Ovid (I)," 156. On "literal" readings of classical texts in the Middle Ages, see Reynolds, *Medieval Reading*.

[58] Rashdall, *The Universities of Europe in the Middle Ages*, 2. 140–41.

[59] Ibid., 141.

[60] Much of the discussion of William in this paragraph is indebted to Coulson, "Hitherto Unedited Medieval and Renaissance Lives of Ovid (I)," 156–57.

agogy. The "Vulgate" commentary in its line-by-line explication of the *Metamorphoses*, draws on both Arnulf and William. We can see in William's glosses a carry-over from twelfth-century reading practices as outlined by Jacqueline Hamesse:

> The teaching method that the universities had inherited from the twelfth century divided comprehension into three levels: a "grammatical", word-for-word explanation (the *littera*); a literal commentary or paraphrase aimed at providing a grasp of both the general meaning and the nuances of each phrase (the *sensus*); and finally, a deeper, personal explication of the passage as interpreted by the professor (the *sententia*).[61]

Although William's glosses are somewhat utilitarian, reflecting the first two levels perhaps more than the third, his selections of individual lines from Ovid reflect his own hermeneutic, his own sense of the key moments in a given episode.

Unlike Arnulf, William directly addresses Medea and her love for Jason in book 7. The opening lines of his glosses on this book constitute a summary of the whole episode, including the background of the golden fleece, the love of Jason and Medea, the rejuvenation of Eason, the death of Pelias, and the flight of Medea (fol. 87v).[62] From Medea's monologue, William selects a line of key importance as Medea describes her love for Jason: "quemque ego cum rebus, quas totus possidet orbis,/Aesonidem mutasse velim" (and the one whom I would not trade for whatever the whole earth holds, Aeson's son; 7.59–60); here Medea is at her most idealistic, and her statement—to the reader familiar with the story—is rich with dramatic irony. William does not comment at all on this irony, that being out of the range of his purposes, yet his choice of this single line from her monologue shows an awareness of Ovid's use of irony within the heroine's deliberations. Strikingly, and perhaps in a show of sympathy to Medea, William includes next the line in which Jason pledges his love to Medea: "perque patrem soceri . . . futuri" (by the father of his future father-in-law; 7.96). Throughout William places the spotlight on the key incidents in an episode, whether love or magic.

In book 10, William provides detailed glosses for the Pygmalion

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[61] Jacqueline Hamesse, "The Scholastic Model of Reading," in *A History of Reading in the West*, eds. Guglielmo Cavallo and Roger Chartier, trans. Lydia G. Cochrane (Amherst, 1999), 112.

[62] Berlin, Staatsbibliothek preussischer Kulturbesitz, MS. Lat. qu. 219, fols. 824-118v.

and Myrrha episodes, but especially the Atalanta story (Plate 1). In his commentary on the Propoetides tale, William unravels Ovid's question, which is presented through several subjunctive clauses: "At si forte roges fecundam Amathunta metallis,/an genuisse velit Propoetidas, abnuat aeque/atque illos, gemino quondam quibus aspera cornu/frons erat, unde etiam nomen traxere Cerastae" (But if you should ask, by chance, if Amathus, rich in metals, is pleased to have produced the Propoetides, she would reject them and those, once, whose brows were fierce with double horns, whence they drew the name Cerastae; 10.220–223). In his notations, William concentrates on Amathus' rejection (*abnuat*; 10.221; *denegabit*; fol. 90v)[63] of the Propoetides and their sacrilegious behavior sacrificing guests on Jupiter's altar, which led to Venus' transformation of them into bulls. William doesn't remark on Venus' intervention, but focuses mainly on the response of the city Amathus and her disowning of her former daughters. Then he moves directly into the Pygmalion story. William reveals an error in the Latin text of Ovid which he cites; in Ovid's text the line reads, "Quas quia Pygmalion aevum per crimen agentis/viderat, offensus vitiis, quae plurima menti femineae natura dedit, sine coniuge caelebs/vivebat" (Because Pygmalion had seen these women leading their lives in corruption, offended by their depravity, which nature has given in abundance to the female mind, he lived as a bachelor without a wife; 10.243–46). William cites Ovid's line as "per crimen *gentis*" (my emphasis) and glosses *gentis* as "per gentem feminosam" (through the female race; fol. 90v), no doubt influenced by the misogynist line which follows in Ovid. But the commentator does not tarry here; instead he moves on to the more compelling aspects of the Pygmalion episode: the ambiguities of the world of art to which Pygmalion becomes captive. William highlights the line in which Orpheus describes Pygmalion's statue as so beautiful and so lifelike that she seems to respond to Pygmalion's affections: "quam vivere credas,/et, si non obstet reverentia, velle moveri:/ars adeo latet arte sua" (whom you would believe living, and if modesty didn't prevent it, wishing to be moved: so far does art lie concealed within its own art; 10.250–52). William glosses *reverentia* with *verecundia*, emphasizing Ovid's subtle rendering of the scene and of this statue, whose apparent modesty and wishes to move, are finally all a part of the rap-

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[63] William provides the future *denegabit* as the Latin text he copies has "abnuet," which he takes for a future tense.

turous Pygmalion's subjective responses. Drawing attention here as well is Ovid's famous line about the nature of art: William recasts the line as "arcificium non apparet in re arcificiali" (the art, ingenuity is not revealed in the work of art; fol. 90v). The commentator also includes Ovid's line that Pygmalion marveled (*miratur*) over his creation, noting that Pygmalion marvels because "talem fecerat ymaginem" (he had made such an image; fol. 90v); William offers only a few lines on the story of Myrrha, compared to most of a column (fol. 90v, col. b) which is devoted to the Atalanta story. Given that William shows elsewhere that he is not averse to treating psychological matter in Ovid's narrative, one suspects a certain hesitance when the subject turns to incest. He mentions the "delictum" and glosses the prohibitions of the festival of Ceres which coincide with it but moves quickly from the story.

In his treatment of the Atalanta story, however, William features the lines which carry the chief dramatic weight: he glosses Ovid's description of Hippomenes' worry about rivals as the race begins (10.584). Although Ovid doesn't devote much space to Hippomenes' inner thoughts, William cites this lemma ("Invidiamque timet"; he fears envy, fol. 90v) twice, first explaining that another youth may be jealous of him, that he wishes to run with the girl; and second, noting the hatred Hippomenes may experience. Then William includes most of Ovid's description of Atalanta's beauty as she flies past Hippomenes; here as in the Pygmalion episode, William is responsive to Ovid's emphasis upon the aesthetic and visual in these tales. In the Venus/Adonis episode which had intervened between the Pygmalion/Myrrha, and Atalanta tales, William also highlighted the description of Adonis' attractiveness; in all three cases in Ovid, the beloved's beauty captivates the lover, from whose point of view the beauty is described. William is right to emphasize this aspect of Ovid's episodes; Orpheus himself is the larger storyteller of all of these tales (although William does not observe that), and the bard's emphasis on sight seems expressive of his earlier loss of Eurydice by means of his backward glance at her. William's next quotation from Ovid comes from Atalanta's monologue, where she worries about the consequences of her own victory: "non erit invidiae victoria nostra ferendae" (my victory will be one of unbearable resentment; 10.628); William explains "invidiae" as "odium" (fol. 90v). As the last detail of the Atalanta/Hippomenes story, William quotes one of Ovid's most psychologically insightful lines: as the crowd begins to cheer

on Hippomenes, it would be hard to say whether Hippomenes or Atalanta wished more for his victory: "dubium, Megareius heros/ gaudeat an virgo magis his Schoeneia dictis" (10.659–60). The commentator explains that "so rejoiced Atalanta; and so[64] Hippomenes, that he wished that he would obtain the victory over the youths" (fol. 90v). William's commentary provides literal, and literary, readings; it shows an intermediate stage between Arnulf's moralizing and historical readings, and the full edition containing both traditional moralizing glosses and literal and poetic readings: the hybrid which the "Vulgate" commentary illustrates. Yet, although William's glosses are fewer, often of a more limited nature, and neither as extensive nor as complex as the glosses found in the "Vulgate," his commentary reveals an interest in the psychological aspects of an episode, in and of themselves. Although William echoes Ovid's comments regarding the nature of the Propoetides and the nature of "woman," his more literary readings reorient the emphasis away from old saws about gender and toward the complexity of Pygmalion's and Atalanta's responses to the situations in which they find themselves.

The "Vulgate" Commentary, c. 1240–1250

The "Vulgate" *Metamorphoses*, written in France, possibly near Orléans, was an extremely popular Latin school text of Ovid's poem whose commentary, in addition to providing inherited moralizing glosses, addressed matters of medieval poetics and characterization. Although some glosses from the "Vulgate" can be traced to William's *Bursarii Ovidianorum*, the "Vulgate" appears to be the first commentary on the *Metamorphoses* to manifest independent interest in questions of Ovidian narrative and psychological interiority. In addition to the usual classical allusions dotting the texts of other commentaries on classical works, the "Vulgate" also makes reference to such medieval authors as Alan of Lille, Walter of Châtillon, and Bernard Silvester; such classical authors as Virgil, Ovid, Statius, Lucan, and Juvenal; and such works as the *Ilias latina* (s. i) and *Pamphilus* (s. xii).[65] Furthermore, as Coulson states:

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[64] The text is difficult to read: the word is either "sic" or "sive," the latter offering the ambivalent meaning of Ovid's own line.

[65] Coulson, *The "Vulgate" Commentary*, 10–11. This edition, based on Sélestat,

> The "Vulgate" commentary enjoyed an immense popularity and wide circulation in numerous manuscripts of the *Metamorphoses*; in addition, extensive sections from it appear in scholia (both named and anonymous) from the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.[66]

That commentaries of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, which provided both non-moralizing and moralizing glosses, were not only available but popular in the Middle Ages, suggests another possible form of the poem with which a poet such as Chaucer may have been working. Coulson also comments upon the status held by the "Vulgate" commentary *qua* commentary: "The work quickly achieved a degree of recognition and *auctoritas* unusual for anonymous glosses on classical authors. Nearly all extant witnesses display a remarkable uniformity in layout and physical composition . . . the text of the commentary is extremely stable, displaying none of the fluidity so characteristic of other anonymous commentaries during the medieval period."[67] The "Vulgate" commentator manifests a sensitivity to Ovidian character psychology, drawing comparison between heroines caught in similar predicaments. His glosses reveal that Ovid's heroines' speeches were taught from the standpoint of rhetoric and oratory. The "Vulgate" commentary is important for what it reveals about non-polarizing ways in which the feminine was presented in the medieval classroom. Indeed, this commentator's glosses on the heroines' inward dialogue and modes of self-address would resurface in Raphael Regius' edition of the *Metamorphoses*, the most widely-read school text of, and commentary on, the poem in sixteenth- and early seventeenth-century Europe.

For the purposes of my discussion, I will be quoting from two copies of the "Vulgate": Sélestat MS 92 and Austin TX, MS 34;[68] like all other manuscripts of the "Vulgate," both were copied near

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Bibliothèque humaniste, MS 92 (s. xiii), contains *Metamorphoses*, books 1.1–150 and 10.1–77. Coulson ("The *Vulgate* Commentary on Ovid's *Metamorphoses*," *Mediaevalia* 13 [1989 for 1987], 29) points out that this tradition of the *Metamorphoses* was first noted in 1920; see L. Castiglioni, "Spogli riccardiani," *Bollettino di filologia classica* 27 (1920): 162–66. Coulson has now identified twenty-two manuscripts of the "Vulgate" commentary; see fn. 3 (above): *Incipitarium*, 123–25.

[66] Coulson, *The "Vulgate" Commentary*, 7.

[67] Frank T. Coulson, "MSS of the 'Vulgate' Commentary on Ovid's *Metamorphoses*: a Checklist" *Scriptorium* 39 (1985), 120.

[68] Sélestat, Bibliothèque humaniste, MS 92; and Harry Ransom Humanities Research Center, University of Texas at Austin, MS 34. In discussing the Sélestat and Austin MSS, I quote only the thirteenth-century glosses.

Orléans in the mid- to late thirteenth century. The Sélestat MS appears to have been copied after 1250 and its commentary was written also in the late thirteenth century, but in a different hand.[69] Austin MS 34 was also written in the later thirteenth century, and according to Coulson, "Text and gloss hand correspond."[70] Coulson has demonstrated that the *accessus* of the "Vulgate" differs in a number of ways from traditional *accessus* form.[71] The commentator abandons the biography and replaces the six elements of the *accessus* with four: *de quo* (*materia—mutacio*), *ad quid* (*intencio*), *qualiter* (*utilitas*), and *titulus*. To Arnulf's triad within the category of *materia* (*naturalis, magica, spiritualis*), the "Vulgate" adds *moralis*.[72] The "Vulgate" commentator removes the multiple moralizing "*intentiones*" present in Arnulf's *accessus*, leaving in their place Ovid's single *intencio*: to make restitution to Augustus for writing the *Ars Amatoria* (one of the causes for Ovid's exile), by depicting Augustus' deification at the end of the *Metamorphoses*. The *accessus* of the "Vulgate," then, reflects the commentary's more secular, philosophical, and even scientific nature, illustrating in some ways how much Orléans had changed in seventy-five years since the time of Arnulf, and how different the prerogatives and *modus legendi* of thirteenth-century commentators were in constructing a pedagogical text and apparatus for Ovid's poem.

Coulson also notes the pedagogic voice which occasionally surfaces in the "Vulgate." In book 8, when Scylla observes to herself that "ignavis precibus Fortuna repugnat" (Fortune rejects fainthearted prayers; 8.73), the commentator offers this interpretation for his students: "rogate cotidie deum ut faciat uos bonos clericos. Non ideo faciet nisi circa studium intencionem aliquam inponatis. Rogate, ergo, fortunam, id est deum, non precibus solum set opere" (For instance, ask God daily to make you good clerics, but he will not do so unless

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[69] Coulson, "MSS of the 'Vulgate' Commentary on Ovid's *Metamorphoses*: a Checklist," 126.

[70] Coulson, "MSS of the 'Vulgate' Commentary on Ovid's *Metamorphoses*: Addendum" *Scriptorium* 41 (1987), 263.

[71] The discussion of the *accessus* of the "Vulgate" is indebted to Coulson, "Hitherto Unedited Medieval and Renaissance Lives of Ovid (I)," 158–61.

[72] Ibid., 159–60. In providing part of his derivation for Ovid's name, the commentator remarks that in the works of Ovid, the rhetorical colors, philosophical and scientific *dicta*, and the poet's own wisdom give birth to a fragrant intellect in readers. Further, his etymology of Ovid's name from the Latin *ovum dividens* (dividing the egg), which appears for apparently the first time in the tradition, was to resurface in many lives of Ovid in the Middle Ages.

you mingle your desire with purpose. Therefore ask fortune, that is God, not only with prayer but with deeds; fol. 70r).[73] This type of comment is particularly useful for our understanding not only of the type of (live) audience for which the "Vulgate" was written, but therefore for the larger implications about the way male pupils were presented with literary constructions of the feminine in classical texts, as will be discussed further below. Glosses in medieval school texts of classical authors, as Reynolds has shown, "are teachers' notes in teachers' books and can serve, in some cases, as the best witnesses we have to a set of pedagogic practices and a very public form of reading."[74]

A striking example of such pedagogic notations may be found in the "Vulgate" commentary on *Metamorphoses* book 10. The "Vulgate" commentator remarks upon a narrative *ecphrasis*[75] which is central to the construction of Orpheus' song and larger themes: Venus' story of Atalanta told to Adonis (book 10.560–704). As Coulson has pointed out, the commentator notes:

> Et ecce verba que (Venus) dixit [et] in oratione sua intendit Adoni ostendere qua de causa odio habeat leones. Set a longe incipit, scilicet ab Ypomene et Athalante, qualiter auxilio Veneris eam currendo superavit. Unde dicit *forsitan* etc. (fol. 98v)
>
> These are the words which Venus said and in her speech she intended to show Adonis why she hates lions. But she begins diffusely, that is from Hippomenes and Atalanta, how by Venus' help he conquered her by running. Thus she says *forsitan* etc.

Coulson here interprets "a longe" as "with a digression," since "longe" in reference to speech often means "at length" or "diffusely."[76] Such notations reflect that students were being taught about Ovid's narrative methods; due attention is given to the structure and length of a

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[73] Coulson, "The 'Vulgate' Commentary on Ovid's *Metamorphoses*," 36. I adopt Coulson's translation here; however, all remaining translations from the "Vulgate" are my own.

[74] Suzanne Reynolds, "Glossing Horace: Using the Classics in the Medieval Classroom" in *Medieval Manuscripts of the Latin Classics*, 107; see also Gernot Wieland, *The Latin Glosses on Arator and Prudentius in Cambridge University Library MS GG.5.35* (Toronto, 1983), 192.

[75] Thus Crump labels Orpheus' song an *epyllion* in its own right (*The Epyllion*, 207).

[76] *A Latin Dictionary*, s.v. *longus*. Coulson, "The 'Vulgate' Commentary on Ovid's *Metamorphoses*," 37.

speech within a larger tale. As I will discuss further below, the "Vulgate" also identifies subtle changes of the speaker's *personae* within a speech, a device of oratory which Quintilian discusses in the *Institutes.*[77]

The intended audience for the "Vulgate" commentary was, apparently, students, and its hermeneutic literal so as to elucidate for the learner the whole range of scientific, mythological, and literary material contained in the *Metamorphoses*;[78] yet these are not the only ways we can read its rich content. The "Vulgate," as with other commentaries, has much to tell us on a cultural level as well. What do its marginalia reveal about the ways in which the feminine (as least as constructed by Ovid) was read by yet another reader in thirteenth-century Orléans? As Coulson has shown, the "Vulgate" commentary manifests an interest in character and characterization.[79] Several of the heroines' monologues in books 7 and 10 offer a fascinating glimpse into the commentator's assessment of the Ovidian heroine's dilemmas of intentionality. In Medea's monologue, as she tells herself to shake off her passion for Jason (7.17), the commentator notes her self-address in a marginal gloss which explains the imperative *excute*, noting that she also answers *si possem*, (if I could) to her own self (*modo sibi ipsi respondens & si possem*; Sélestat, MS 92, fol. 58v; Austin MS 34, fol. 53v). Later in her monologue, after she resolves to act to help Jason, the commentator identifies her sudden change in perspective when glossing Ovid's line, "prodamne ego regna parentis?" (will I betray my father's kingdom? 7.38). His gloss

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[77] Another marginal annotation in one copy of the "Vulgate" reveals an awareness of Ovid's structuring principles. As was made clear in chapter 2, Ovid constructed the flight of Medea in book 7 as an innovation in the representation of the character's inner world. By providing a profusion of myths, many of which are connected thematically to Medea's own past experiences with Jason, he creates a narrative segment which further adumbrates the complex of concerns at work in her psyche. Very few commentators observe this segment as a separate unit in Ovid's larger poem, with the exception of the "Vulgate" commentator and Thomas Walsingham. The "Vulgate" often indicates an awareness of Ovid's digressions, or narrative *excursus*, in his narrative. In the Austin MS 34 copy of the "Vulgate," there is a strikingly large marginal notation of the Medea flight passage in book 7 with the words "SALTUS MEDEÆ" (Medea's flight; fol. 59v). The marginal note, possibly written later than the thirteenth century, is approximately half the size of the capital letter which begins each book. While it may simply reflect a scribe's doodling, there are no other marginal notations in the manuscript marked with capital letters like this. It shows at least one reader's awareness of this flight episode as a separate segment in book 7 of the *Metamorphoses*.

[78] Coulson, "The 'Vulgate' Commentary on Ovid's *Metamorphoses*," 34.

[79] Ibid., 41–43.

for *prodamne* (Sélestat MS 92, fol. 58v; also Austin MS 34, fol. 54r) is *revocat animum suum ab amore* (she summons her soul back from love). Even further, as she again shifts from exultation in her prospects as Jason's new queen to fears about encountering Scylla and Charybdis in their voyage and other dangers, the commentator captures the turn in thought, as Ovid presents it, in the interrogative *quid*: "Et dis cara ferar et vertice sidera tangam!/Quid quod nescio qui mediis occurrere in undis/Dicuntur montes" (And I will become dear to the gods and my head will touch the heavens!/What of the fact that some mountains are said to clash in the middle of the sea . . .? 7.61–63). The commentator reveals his understanding of the shift in Medea's perspective; for him, *quid* signals again her turning from love: *hic se revocat ab amore dicens quid* (here she summons herself away from love, saying *what of*; Sélestat MS 92, fol. 59r; Austin MS 34, fol. 54r; Plate 2).

Ovid's rendering of Scylla's interior monologue, in *Metamorphoses* 8.1–44–80, provides a further illustration of the "Vulgate" commentator's attention to characterization. Scylla struggles over desire for an enemy of her homeland and proceeds, like Medea, to risk family and country for her beloved, Minos, king of Crete and enemy of Greece. Scylla's father, King Nisus of Megara, possesses one purple lock of hair which, according to the fates, if it is severed, will guarantee the end of his kingdom as well as his life. Scylla resolves to cut off the lock and give it to Minos to ensure his victory over the city of Megara; however, when she does, Minos not only claims victory over the city but also curses Scylla for her treachery, patricide, and disloyalty.[80] Peter Knox has shown that in other contemporary versions of the story, the nurse (the traditional go-between in love relationships) plays a central role in advancing Scylla's passion.[81] But in Ovid, both of these elements are missing, leaving Scylla with sole responsibility for her passion and her crime. On one level Scylla illustrates a female character consumed with a type of infatuation which leads to dire consequences. However, she and some other

[80] In the Scholiast's commentary on Euripides' *Hippolytus*, Minos has promised to marry Scylla before she offers him the lock of hair; in the poem *Ciris* (third century A.D.), which offers a full development of the myth, Minos will offer Scylla either love or marriage (it is not made clear) in exchange for her severing of the lock of hair; see R. O. A. M. Lyne, ed., *Ciris* (Cambridge, 1978), 178, 179.

[81] Peter Knox, "Scylla's Nurse," *Mnemosyne* 43 (1990): 158–59.

Ovidian heroines also illustrate a resistance against systems of political and familial authority which may have offered an attractive fantasy for medieval and early modern clerical readers, themselves caught in various webs of ecclesiastical authority. At one point Scylla even questions the existence of the gods, stating that each person is his or her own god (8.72–73). In medieval and early modern editions, this line receives its share of condemnatory annotations, but by the early modern period, it is underlined by some readers and even italicized in the printed text, as if it were a *sententia*.[82]

The "Vulgate" commentator makes a number of comments about Scylla's inward dialogue. When, after debating over her course of action, she begins to address the distant Minos with "pulcherrime regum" (most handsome of kings; 8.49), the commentator notes the shift in *persona* and remarks that "convertit sermonem suum ad minoem dicens *o pulcherrime*" (she turns her speech to Minos, saying "*oh most handsome*"; Sélestat MS 92, fol. 69v; Austin MS 34, fol. 67v). Two lines later, Scylla returns to a self-address with "O ego ter felix" (51), noting her happiness if she could be transported to Minos' camp. The "Vulgate" commentator again observes the shift in addressee, with "convertit sermonem suum ad se ipsam dicens *o ter.*" (she addresses her speech to herself, saying "*oh, three times*"; Sélestat MS 92, fol. 69v; Austin MS 34, fol. 67v). Further in the monologue, as Scylla chastises herself for her unwillingness to help Minos, she says, "altera iamdudum succensa cupidine tanto/perdere gauderet, quodcumque obstaret amori" (another girl, swept up in such great desire, would rejoice to lose anything that was an obstacle to love; 8. 74–75). Here the commentator notes that Scylla battles inwardly: "se repugnat" (Sélestat MS 92, fol. 70r; Austin MS 34, fol. 68r). Finally, as the speech concludes, the commentator observes that Scylla has been speaking with herself: "loquebatur scilla ad se ipsam" (Scylla was speaking to herself; Sélestat MS 92, fol. 704; Austin MS 34, fol. 68r). As above, often during an Ovidian heroine's monologue the "Vulgate" commentary will remark shifts in point of view or addressee with "mutat personam." The word

[82] In London, British Library 1001.D. 19, a 1584 edition containing George Sabinus' commentary, we see the printed marginal annotation "votum impium," yet the entire passage is underlined (fol. 297). In 1637, in Thomas Farnaby's edition of the poem, Scylla's statement is the only italicized line in all of book 8 (London, British Library, 76.h.11, fol. 43).

persona meant a range of things in medieval Latin, including "individual," "identity," "appearance," "personality." Thus, for the "Vulgate" commentator, Atalanta changes her appearance, or position.[83] Reynolds has shown how Horace was read in medieval classrooms to illustrate many features of classical rhetoric.[84] It may be that this use of the term *persona*, noted frequently in the "Vulgate," illustrates the figure Quintilian discusses in the *Institutio Oratoria*,[85] and that here the "Vulgate" commentator illustrates one of the features of oratory (that is, changing one's stance) from the Ovidian heroine's monologue; however, this will have to remain speculation, as it is difficult to determine how much of Quintilian's work was available to the commentator in the thirteenth century. Whatever the source, the commentator's usage seems to designate a rhetorical device, and Coulson discusses the wide range of other rhetorical figures which are noted in this commentary.[86] It is clear not only from the nature of the material contained in the *Metamorphoses*, but also the sophisticated commentary the "Vulgate" commentator provides (using such glosses as *jurisdictionis*, Austin MS 34, fol. 67v; and *antipophora*, Sélestat, MS 92, fol.94r), that the students concerned would have been advanced, perhaps university-level students, some of whom may have been heading for advanced training in the law. By 1493 at Padua, we find the lecturer in rhetoric Raphael Regius, who drew from the "Vulgate," regularly commenting upon the Ovidian heroine's speeches from the standpoint of oratory.

After Scylla obtains the lock from her father and hands it over to Minos, Ovid emphasizes Minos' reactions to the situation: he recoils when she gives him the gift, and curses her:

> di te summoveant, o nostri infamia saecli,
> orbe suo, tellusque tibi pontusque negetur!
> Certe ego non patiar Iovis incunabula, Creten,
> qui meus est orbis, tantum contingere monstrum.

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[83] J. F. Niermeyer, *Mediae Latinitatis Lexicon Minus* (Brill, 1976). R. E. Latham, *Revised Medieval Latin Word-List from British and Irish Sources* (London, 1965), also offers the definition "character, recognized position."

[84] Reynolds, *Medieval Reading*, 133.

[85] Quintilian, *Institutio Oratoria*, ed. Halm (Cambridge, 1966) discusses the oratorical device of *fictiones personarum*, or "personification," in 9.2.26f. In this section Quintilian discusses fictional addresses to others not present, along with many other oratorical poses, under the category of rhetorical figures.

[86] Coulson, *The "Vulgate" Commentary on Ovid's "Metamorphoses,"* 9–10.

> May the gods remove you from their world, oh disgrace of our age, and may earth and sea be denied to you! Indeed I will not allow so great a monster to touch the cradle of Jupiter, Crete, my world. (8.97–100)

The terms of Minos' curse are somewhat formulaic in classical literature; in other cases of crimes against kin such as incest, the guilty character often asks that earth and sea deny him or her refuge because of the enormity of the crime. Ovid emphasizes Minos' horror at the thought that Scylla could sacrifice her father's life and kingdom for her own personal gain. The poet then describes Minos as "iustissimus auctor" (8.101), a "most upright lawgiver," who proceeds to impose laws on Megara, now under his domination. Minos had in fact come to Megara to attempt to conquer it with his men. In some accounts of the myth, Minos leaves Megara immediately. Ovid chooses to have Minos stay to set laws in place, and then return to Crete; Scylla's unmanning of her father has made available to Minos a new political potency. In Scylla's later harangue to Minos as he departs, she observes the irony of his actions, that he owes his newfound power to her even as he repudiates her:

> "Quo fugis" exclamat "meritorum auctore relicta,
> o patriae praelate meae, praelate parenti?
> quo fugis, inmitis, cuius victoria nostrum
> et scelus et meritum est?
> . . . nam quo deserta revertar?
> . . . cur, qui vicisti crimine nostro,
> insequeris crimen? scelus hoc patriaeque patrique est,
> officium tibi sit!" (8.107–11; 113; 129–31)

> "Where do you escape to," she cries out, "having deserted the author of your achievements, you, placed before my fatherland, placed before my father? where do you flee to, harsh one, whose victory is both my crime and my service to you . . . where shall I turn, deserted? . . . why do you, who have conquered by means of my crime, censure my crime? Let this crime against both my fatherland and father be a sacred duty in your eyes!"

Scylla's questions suggest that the earlier adjective "iustissimus" (most just) held multiple valences. Minos' choice to stay and profit from Scylla's heinous crime affords a number of ironies which can then become material for the "abandoned heroine" monologue which Ovid develops for Scylla. That Scylla is aware of the ironies underlying Minos' new accession of power certainly indicates Ovid's own

awareness of them; but, far from indicating any type of judgment on Minos, he allows that judgment to be mediated through the speech of the impassioned heroine. The "Vulgate" commentator observes at this point the similarity of Scylla's situation (her abandonment and betrayal) to that of Medea and Dido (Sélestat MS 92, fol. 70v; Austin MS 34, fol. 68v).

The "Vulgate" commentary also remarks frequently upon the more psychological aspects of Myrrha's and Atalanta's monologues in book 10. Pupils (soon-to-be-clerics) learning from this commentary would be taught to consider the feminine in ways outside of polarizing approaches. During Myrrha's monologue, she wrestles with her desire and her knowledge of the multiplicity of wrongs inherent in the act of incest. Throughout her inward debate, she shifts back and forth, reflecting this struggle (342–48):

> . . . retinet malus ardor amantem,
> ut praesens spectem Cinyram tangamque loquarque
> osculaque admoveam, si nil conceditur *ultra*;
> *ultra* autem sperare aliquid potes, inpia virgo,
> et, quot confundas et iura et nomina, sentis?
> tune eris et matris paelex et adultera patris?
> tune soror nati genetrixque vocabere fratris?
>
> An evil desire prevents my fleeing, that I would look at Cinyras in person and touch him and speak to him and kiss him, if he allows nothing *further*. *Further*—can you hope for anything further, profane girl, and do you see how many rights and names you confound? Will you be both your mother's rival and your father's adulteress? Will you be named your son's sister and your brother's mother? (emphasis added)

The "Vulgate" commentator observes Ovid's transition, as the poet repeats "ultra" (further) in ll. 344 and 345 as the pivot in her thought (an Ovidian device Chrétien de Troyes and other early romance writers had already used frequently in lovers' soliloquies).[87] His comment is "modo se redarguit de concupiscientia sua. unde dicit: *Ultra*" (Now she refutes herself concerning her lust. Thus she says: *Further*;

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[87] See also Medea's self-rebuke in *Metamorphoses* 7.17–18: "excute virgineo conceptas pectore flammas,/*si potes*, infelix. *si possem*, sanior essem . . ." (above). In Chrétien's *Cliges*, cf. ll. 480–85; 515–20; 620–25 (see Jean Frappier, *Chrétien de Troyes: The Man and His Work*, trans. Raymond J. Cormier (Athens, Ohio, 1982), 87). See also *Erec and Enide* 3738–3765; and Thomas of Britain's *Tristran*, ll. 138–48, as Tristran doubts Yseult's love for him.

Sélestat MS 92, fol. 94v; Austin MS 34, fol. 96v). In his use of the verb *redarguere*, the commentator draws on legal and oratorical vocabulary used by both Cicero and Quintilian for refuting of the opposition.[88] Finally, the commentator not only devotes attention to her inner dilemma, he also observes subtle changes in her voice and her address. When Myrrha changes heart and rebukes herself, "inpia virgo" (corrupt girl), the commentator notes briefly beside her vocative: "Loquitur ad se ipsam tamquam ad aliam" (she speaks to her own self as though to another; Austin MS 34, fol. 96v).

Atalanta's monologue, too, shows the "Vulgate" commentator's interest in such concerns. During her monologue, after warning Hippomenes to escape their marriage while there is still time and admitting that she cares for him, Atalanta abruptly changes her perspective, saying, "Viderit" (Let him see!; 10.624). With this word, we witness a marked shift in Atalanta's feelings once again, as she defies him to find out the truth for himself. At this point, the "Vulgate" gloss reads "*Viderit.* Id est. Videbitur si fuero [mota] super illum. Mutat personam" (*Let him see.* That is, it will be seen if I will have been moved past him. She changes her front; Austin MS 34, fol. 100v).[89] In its use of the word *persona*, this reading captures Atalanta's shift in appearance, if not true feeling. As Atalanta's monologue continues, she defies Hippomenes to risk his life, to die:

> . . . intereat, quoniam tot caede procorum
> admonitus non est agiturque in taedia vitae!
> occidet hic igitur, voluit quia vivere mecum,
> indignamque necem pretium patietur amoris? (624–27)
>
> Let him die, since he has not been warned by the slaughter of so many suitors and he is driven into a disgust for life! Will he die therefore, because he wanted to live with me, and will he suffer an undeserved death as the price for love?

Here the commentator identifies her fluctuating perspective in a marginal gloss: "hoc quod dixerat *intereat.* in se redarguit dicens *igitur*" (this word which she had said, *let him die.* she refutes herself saying *therefore*; Sélestat MS 92, fol. 98r; Austin MS 34, fol. 100v). At line

[88] Cicero, *de Oratore* 2.72.293; Quintilian 6.3.73.

[89] Sélestat 92 supplies the "mota" missing in the Austin MS in this comment, yet the Sélestat manuscript does not provide the "mutat personam" comment at this juncture.

629, Atalanta again shifts in her feelings, this time in mid-line: "Sed non culpa mea est! utinam desistere velles" (But it is not my fault. If only you wanted to stop). At this point the "Vulgate" commentator offers again the interlinear gloss, "mutat personam" (she changes her front; Austin MS 34, fol. 100v). In a way that is rarely evidenced in medieval commentaries on the *Metamorphoses*, this commentator is responsive to the Ovidian representation of the female character's inner thoughts, desires, and vacillating perspectives.

Like the many commentaries both preceding and following it, the "Vulgate" incorporates allegorical, historical, and moralistic readings of myths. But it also shows keen attention to Ovid's characterization in ways which set it apart from other contemporary versions of the poem, providing an illuminating window onto alternate, nonmoralizing readings of the poem which were also clearly of much interest in this period, to judge from the wide circulation of the "Vulgate." This commentary also offers intriguing evidence that the *Metamorphoses* may have been used in training advanced students in rhetoric and features of oratory. That a work of classical poetry so replete with rhetorical effects as the *Metamorphoses* was thus employed in the medieval classroom is not perhaps unexpected; however, in Ovid's poem, the vast majority of "barristers" are female characters.[90] In a striking turn of events, then, for the all-male students of the medieval *studium* or university, the feminine is not only good to think with, but is also presented as a model good to "speak with." If this method of reading the *Metamorphoses* had its beginnings in the twelfth century, by the high Renaissance, Raphael Regius would it employ it regularly.

Ovide moralisé, *1316–28*[91]

The *Ovide moralisé*, which has often received the lion's share of modern critical attention to medieval commentaries on the *Metamorphoses*,

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[90] The "disputing woman" was not unheard of in medieval literature, as Helen Solterer has shown. The heroines' speeches in the *Metamorphoses*, however, are clearly constructed by Ovid as mini-orations. Their plethora of oratorical and rhetorical features (particularly the former) challenged certain medieval assumptions concerning the speech, and thinking, of "woman."

[91] Dates provided by Minnis, *Medieval Literary Theory*, 318.

was written in the early part of the fourteenth century.[92] Renate Blumenfeld-Kosinski states that it may have been written by a Franciscan friar.[93] The first known French allegorization and translation of the poem, it too had a wide circulation. Because its style and approach to Ovid's *fabulae* are well known, we need consider here only a few selected passages for the sake of comparison with the foregoing and following commentaries on and summaries of *Metamorphoses* 10. The *Ovide moralisé* contains a lengthy segment on book 10, one which in places seems to be indebted to Fulgentius, Arnulf, and the "Vulgate" commentary. In its readings of the feminine, the *Ovide moralisé* reveals the same penchant as that seen in Arnulf and Garland: a shutting down of the complex subjectivity Ovid explores, and a tendency to mediate binary approaches.

In the *Ovide moralisé*'s rendition (10.1080–1959) of the Myrrha tale, the inner turmoil of Myrrha is depicted as well, but we see a Cinyras quite different from the figure found in Ovid. In Ovid the nurse finds Cinyras drunk with wine in his wife's absence, and he merely asks the age of the young woman the nurse offers, then sends for her. The French poem introduces Cinyras into the narrative first with words of praise: he is "preuz et sage et de grant renon" ("prudent, wise, and of great renown"; 3580).[94] The *Ovide moralisé* also has the nurse offer a potion to Cinyras, which causes his drunkenness; furthermore, Cinyras first refuses the nurse's offer of a young woman, on the grounds of his sexual faithfulness to his wife. Only later does he give in to the nurse's ploys. An additional difference in the *Ovide moralisé*'s account is that when the nurse returns to Myrrha to tell her that her father will receive her that night, Myrrha is overcome with joy; but Ovid renders her response in a manner which suggests greater ambivalence: "infelix non toto pectore sentit/laetitiam virgo, praesagaque pectora maerent,/sed tamen et gaudet: tanta est discordia mentis" (the unhappy girl felt no gladness in all of her heart, and her spirit grieved over presentiments/but yet she rejoiced: so great was the division in her mind; 10.443–45). Further, although

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92 See, for example, Demats, *Fabula*, 61–105; J. Engels, *Études sur l'Ovide moralisé* (Groningen, 1945).

93 Renate Blumenfeld-Kosinski, *Reading Myth: Classical Mythology and Its Interpretations in Medieval French Literature* (Stanford, 1997), 90.

94 *Ovide moralisé*, ed. Cornelius de Boer, *Verhandelingen der Koninklijke Akademie van Wettenschappen te Amsterdam* (Amsterdam, 1915) N. R. Deel 37.

Ovid says of the couple's sexual unions merely that "postera nox facinus geminat, nec finis in illa est" (the next night redoubled their crime, nor was that night the last, 10.471), in the *Ovide moralisé*, it is Myrrha who returns repeatedly, unable to quench her sexual lusts: "Tant li plot, tant li abelit/La lecherie et le delit,/Qu 'ele ne s'en puet consirrer" (So great the pleasure, so great the enjoyment, the lechery and the delight, that she could not restrain herself; 1880–83). Here in problematic ways the *Ovide moralisé* eliminates Cinyras' guilt and presents Myrrha as a woman who not only is possessed by an illicit desire, but exults in it. The *Ovide moralisé*'s readings are in the main followed in British Library MS Royal 17.E.iv, a 15th-century version of the poem upon which William Caxton apparently based his own translation of the *Metamorphoses* (the first English translation of the poem) in 1480.[95] Furthermore, the earlier *Ovide moralisé* also shows a pronounced interest in the psychological quandary which afflicts Myrrha, despite the ostensibly sinful nature of her obsession with Cinyras. The French poem not only includes but expands upon the monologues of Ovid's heroines. In the case of Myrrha, the narrative appears to be at cross-purposes with itself. Ultimately the author of the *Ovide moralisé*, following Myrrha's prayer for forgiveness at the end of the tale, will comment that pardon is available for any repentant sinner, regardless of the enormity of his or her crime. Yet this observation is made only after the narrative has fully developed the details of Myrrha's passion. Many scholars have observed a similar dynamic in female saints' lives. Simon Gaunt comments in this regard: "Hagiographical texts about women are deeply voyeuristic, dressing up in a pious framework the most horrific attacks on women, which the women in question are portrayed as welcoming. . . . The value of martyrdom as a sign of faith and self-sacrifice was no doubt clear to medieval audiences, but is there not also an element of pleasure implicit in the numerous descriptions of the violation of nubile female bodies?"[96] Warren Ginsberg also offers a useful way of understanding the complex dynamic underlying some medieval clerics' readings of Ovid the poet of love: "Because love in Ovid is always a textual affair, [it] makes us see that ethical abstinence is itself a

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[95] N. F. Blake, ed., *Selections from William Caxton* (Oxford, 1973), 130.

[96] Simon Gaunt, *Gender and Genre in Medieval French Literature* (Cambridge, 1995), 197–98.

species of desire."[97] Ginsberg argues that clerics reading Ovid's amatory texts engaged in a "drama of simultaneous temptation and resistance."[98] The actions related in the tale itself, and the accompanying allegorizations, reflect the French author's conflicting perspectives. When Myrrha's deeds are allegorized, her actions are "made safe" for the medieval reader: Myrrha is likened in one reading to the Virgin Mary; and when Myrrha gives birth, she is seen as producing good works. As Blumenfeld-Kosinski comments, "This juxtaposition of extremes, an incestuous woman and the Virgin Mary, also defuses the transgressive nature of Myrrha's sexual life."[99]

The *Ovide moralisé*'s readings of the Atalanta story present further illustrations of its multi-layered hermeneutic. Atalanta's monologue offers one illustration of the way in which the French poem reins in the potentially disruptive aspects of the Ovidian heroine's discourse. As the monologue opens, where Ovid simply has, "atque ita . . . inquit" (and so she spoke; 10.611), the *Ovide moralisé* emphasizes the locus of Atalanta's conflict: "En son cuer dist" (in her heart she said; 10.2263). In the *Ovide moralisé* Atalanta speaks of her unwillingness that Hippomenes may offer his body as a "martire" for her love (10.2269), reflecting the medieval Christianizing of the language of love. The next striking change in the *Ovide moralisé* is the reason for her concern for Hippomenes: in Ovid, she says that his youth, not his looks, affects her (10.614–15). In the *Ovide moralisé*, however, Atalanta has been transformed into a courtly heroine who prefers a lover of aristocratic lineage: there she says it is not his beauty that moves her, but the fact that he is young and of noble blood (2275–77). With this change, the *Ovide moralisé* eliminates a string of denials in Ovid's monologue: the rhetorical questions, "What of his strength and mind unafraid of death? What if he claims descent from Neptune? What if he loves; does he value our marriage so much that he would die, if a harsh fate denies me to him?" (10.616–19). As in Ovid, in the *Ovide moralisé* Atalanta enjoins Hippomenes to leave the competition for his own sake. Yet in the *Ovide moralisé*, unlike in Ovid, Atalanta chides herself directly for feeling pity, commenting that

[97] Warren Ginsberg, "*Ovidius ethicus*?: Ovid and the Medieval Commentary Tradition," in *Desiring Discourse: The Literature of Love, Ovid through Chaucer*, eds. James Paxson and Cynthia Gravlee (Selinsgrove, Pennsylvania, 1998), 69.

[98] Ibid., 68.

[99] Blumenfeld-Kosinski, *Reading Myth*, 97.

"Trop a feme le cuer mouvable!" (A woman's heart is too fickle! 10.2295). William Caxton in his 1480 English translation renders this comment: "Overmoche hath a woman her herte chaungeable whan she thus sayeth & gaynsayeth and yet said she agayn . . ." (fol. 24v).[100] What the "Vulgate" commentary in the thirteenth century can observe as an integral aspect of Ovid's characterization, is seen in the fifteenth-century work only as fodder for antifeminist sentiment. Further in her monologue, Atalanta does ask briefly in the *Ovide moralisé* what business it is of hers if Hippomenes dies (2297), echoing a similar question in Ovid (10.626–27). In the *Ovide moralisé*, Atalanta frequently addresses Hippomenes as "enfes" (child; 2283, 2306, 2320), a touch Ovid does not include (except for the reference to Hippomenes' being a boy in 10.615); perhaps this is one way the French poem shows Atalanta's desire to distance herself emotionally from him. But on the whole, the *Ovide moralisé*'s monologue contains less of the Ovidian tactic of denial which characterizes many heroines' monologues. In Ovid, Atalanta denies any feeling or concern for Hippomenes three different times within the 24-line monologue; in the *Ovide moralisé*, there is only one outright denial in 66 lines. In general, there seems some uncertainty among medieval commentators and redactors as to recasting the heroine's monologue. As we have seen, for a time such monologues were passed over in summaries of the poem (Arnulf); even after the *Ovide moralisé*, such commentators as Giovanni del Virgilio and Pierre Bersuire will elide them. Only with Thomas Walsingham in the early fifteenth century does there begin to be a modest attempt, in summaries of the poem, to restore the Ovidian heroine's monologue to something approximating its original form.

Ultimately, the *Ovide moralisé* assesses the story of Atalanta and Hippomenes as a means of spiritual and moral instruction:

> Or dirai l'exposicion
> De ceulz qui devindrent lyon.
> Par Athalenta, la mouvable,
> Qui tant fu bele et delitable
> Que pluisors homes i coroient,
> Qui par s'acointance moroient,
> Puis noter les delis dou monde,

[100] Cambridge, Magdalene College, MS Pepys 2124.

> Où toute vanitez habonde,
> Et fuitive muabletez. (3954–62)

> Now I will tell the story of those who were turned into lions. For Atalanta, the swift, who was so beautiful and delightful that many men desired her, who died for association with her, one can understand the pleasures of the world, in all the false goods it holds, and passing mutability.

Here Atalanta is linked with "vanitez" and "fuitive muabletez," worldly pleasures and mutability, traditional "feminine" associations. Later, after a long diatribe on the dangers of greed following the temple episode, the author refers to the fact that Hippomenes' and Atalanta's hearts are given over to "rage et à desloiauté,/A malice et à cruauté" (anger and disloyalty, malice and cruelty) and other sins such as "avarice," "incontinence," "impetuosité/Ou presumptive hastiveté" (greed, lack of self-control, presumptuous haste (4016–25 *passim*). Yet the last suggests Hippomenes' own sin, since Ovid has Hippomenes initiate the love-making in the temple. The author of the *Ovide moralisé*, in relating Venus' final words in the story, does not include the detail about Venus inflicting Hippomenes with lust. In Ovid, Venus says, "illic concubitus intempestiva cupido/occupat Hippomenen a numine concita nostro" (There untimely desire possessed Hippomenes, incited by my power; 10.689–90). Here the French author notes Venus' anger at Hippomenes' failure to offer thanks for her aid, but no mention is made of her provoking Hippomenes' passion. She refers vaguely to the vengeance she will take but it only occurs indirectly through the anger of Cybele. Thus the responsibility for the temple episode is elided; now Hippomenes and Atalanta desecrate the temple without the agency of Venus, and Cybele appears more just in punishing both. The author then refers to the couple's transformation into lions. In this way Atalanta is punished and condemned for Hippomenes' omission of gratitude to Venus and then for the sexual action which in Ovid he had initiated. Perhaps Atalanta's subjectivity meets this fate as a means of censure; her choice to defy the fates by giving in to her love for Hippomenes represents perhaps too much free agency; and thus in Ovid and in some commentaries, her status as subject is finally elided, silenced.

Finally the *Ovide moralisé* compares Atalanta to the holy Church, "Sainte Iglise" (4036) and the race itself to a spiritual race, complete with crowns ("coronné") and champions ("champions"), run for the

love of God. Hippomenes is likened to "Ceulz qui jadis suelent reprendre/Les coreours de sainte Yglise" (Those who once used to sidetrack the runners of the holy Church; 4073–74). The golden apples are also accorded an allegorical reading here, representing faith, hope, and love (4100–02). The author brings together his multiple allegories at the end, saying:

> Cestes trois vertus esmerees
> Orent cil saint, cil champion,
> Cil fier, cil courageus lyon
> Qui despisoient les desrois
> Et l'orgueil des dus et des rois
> Tout affit et toute manace,
> Si furent ferme en la Dieu grace,
> Et miex vaudrent por Dieu morir
> C'ou mont regner et seignorir.
> L'onor dou monde à vil tenoient. (4111–4120)

> These three pure virtues the saint, the victor, the ferocious brave lion will possess, they who would despise the wickedness and the pride of duke and king, every insult and every threat if they were strong in God's grace, they will prefer to die for God's sake than to rule and govern the world, they would consider the world's honor as nothing.

Here the apples, representing Hippomenes' virtues in Arnulf, and Atalanta's in John of Garland, are given a more universal spiritual signification, as faith, hope, and love, the triad of virtues made famous in 1 Corinthians 13. The *Ovide moralisé* further emphasizes that these three virtues will be present in those who despise worldly power and devote their lives to God.

In its representation of the feminine, the *Ovide moralisé* manifests the dual approach evident in Garland, while also including renditions of heroines' monologues. In its rendering of the Myrrha story, details are changed so as to increase Myrrha's villainy and her father's innocence; conversely, in Atalanta's monologue we can see the French poet at work to evoke something of the original inward turmoil. The inclusion of this and other heroines' monologues gives the poem greater psychological complexity in its constructions of the feminine, but with only a limited glimpse of the psychological terrain explored by Ovid. In the *Ovide moralisé* the poet shows some hesitancy in depicting the Ovidian heroine with the sometimes brusque or defiant statements which characterize her in the *Metamorphoses*, and sometimes her deliberations are elided. In the French poem, Atalanta is,

in short, far more well-behaved and courteous in her statements about Hippomenes; her potentially disruptive discourse has been tempered, brought into line, even as the author's own discourse proliferates. In the *Ovide moralisé*'s allegorizations following each fable, we can see antithetical representations of the feminine, perhaps a variation on the Augustinian perspective of the heavenly versus earthly cities: the personification of virtue or of worldly interests. Here Atalanta is read on the one hand as the delights of the world and *fuitive muabletez*, "passing mutability," and on the other, as the Church itself, out of love for whom many compete in a spiritual race. Again, Ginsberg's assessment is useful, especially for the moralized Ovid: this medieval cleric engaging Ovid's amatory passages reenacts through his polarizing commentary on the feminine a "drama of simultaneous temptation and resistance."[101] Although the *Ovide moralisé* represents something of a distance from the original text of the *Metamorphoses*, many such summaries and allegorizations of the poem, detached from the text itself, were popular in the Middle Ages.

Giovanni del Virgilio, Allegorie Librorum Ovidii Metamorphoseos, *1322–23*

Giovanni del Virgilio was "one of the first of a new generation of classicists," giving lectures on Ovid and Virgil at the University of Bologna.[102] At approximately the same time as the *Ovide moralisé* appeared, Giovanni wrote his *Allegorie*, which presents in turn brief prose and verse summaries and allegorizations of the *Metamorphoses*. Giovanni also exchanged letters in the form of eclogues with Dante, and one of Giovanni's poems, of which only a fragment survives, can be found in a manuscript part of which Boccaccio himself copied.[103] According to Philip Wicksteed and Edmund Gardner, Giovanni "enjoyed a high reputation as a teacher and was an ardent disciple of the great Paduan school of Latin poetry, of which Lovato

[101] Ginsberg, "*Ovidius ethicus?*" 68.

[102] Minnis, *Medieval Literary Theory*, 316. See also Parker, *Commentary and Ideology*, 30; also Frank T. Coulson, "A Checklist of Newly Discovered Manuscripts of the *Allegoriae* of Giovanni del Virgilio," *Studi Medievali* 37 (1996): 443–53.

[103] Philip H. Wicksteed and Edmund Gardner, *Dante and Giovanni del Virgilio* (1902; rpt. New York, 1970), 120.

was the founder and Mussato the chief ornament."[104] Bologna, like Padua, was a student-run university, and Giovanni was held in such high esteem that the students were able to obtain a significant salary increase for him in 1321. Because of a number of dissatisfactions with the university, they threatened to secede from Bologna in this year, and submitted to Pope John XXII a list of demands, among which were several requirements relating to Giovanni. They demanded a substantial pay raise for him, but also demanded that "Master Johannes . . . be held and bound in any year to lecture upon versification and poetry at the will of his hearers, and in any two years to lecture upon the four authors [Virgil, Statius, Lucan, and Ovidius Major], and upon any other authors at the pleasure of his hearers, two in any year according to their choice."[105] The authority of the student body, particularly over the subject matter which Giovanni taught, is not only striking but may shed further light on the choices Giovanni makes in his lectures on the *Metamorphoses*, in the form of the *Allegorie*.

Minnis remarks on Giovanni's work as "a symptom of cultural change in late medieval Italy"; during the latter half of the thirteenth century "classical scholarship, inspired by French precedents, began to put down strong roots in Italian soil." In the *Allegorie*, Giovanni drew liberally from the foregoing commentators, relying mainly on Arnulf for his prose passages (with additional excerpts from Fulgentius, John of Garland, or the Vatican Mythographers) and also from Garland for his verse segments. Minnis observes that Giovanni "hit upon the idea of fusing both kinds of exposition [Arnulf and John of Garland] in one continuous account . . . draw[ing] marginal glossing into the main body of the commentary."[106] The alternation between prose and verse may reflect pedagogical practices, as well; schoolmaster Guarino Guarini of Verona (1374–1460) employed such a method, teaching students how to write on a topic in Latin first in prose and then in verse.[107] For the most part Giovanni's readings of the feminine in *Metamorphoses* 7 and 10 participate in the moralizing, binary approach seen in Arnulf and Garland. Yet Giovanni's

[104] Ibid., 121.
[105] Ibid., 132, 133. "Ovidius Major" refers to the *Metamorphoses*.
[106] Minnis, *Medieval Literary Theory*, 322, 323.
[107] Anthony Grafton and Lisa Jardine, *From Humanism to the Humanities* (Cambridge, 1986), 17.

own verse, to be considered here as well, shows a quite different perspective on the feminine and its potential as a vehicle of dissent.

In his rendering of book 7, Giovanni follows Arnulf's emphasis: although Medea is the primary actor in the opening section of *Metamorphoses* book 7, Giovanni relates events without direct reference to her. Only at the end of Giovanni's detailed summary, once Jason has tamed the bulls, defeated the armed soldiers, and put the dragon to sleep, do we learn of Medea's role: "Et hoc mediante Medea" (and with Medea mediating this; 7.2).[108] Since Giovanni's work offers only brief summaries, he gives little attention to Medea's, or any other heroine's, monologue. Later, after explaining many of the references contained in the flight episode, Giovanni ends by interpreting Medea (now married to Aegeus, father of Theseus) as follows: "Per Medeam novercam intelligo personas malas, que odiunt virtuosos et persecuntur ipsos. Sed virtuosi prevalent, et eorum fama cantatur" (By Medea the stepmother I understand evil persons, who hate the virtuous and persecute them. But the virtuous prevail, and their fame is sung; 7.22).

Giovanni's rendition of book 10 echoes in its content much of what we have seen before in Fulgentius and Arnulf; part of Giovanni's contribution to the stream of commentaries is his alternation between prose and verse, in the manner of Boethius and Alan of Lille's *De Planctu Naturae*. The verses provide an echo-effect to the prose account while adding some new touches; here Giovanni incorporates the detail that Orpheus refuses to pursue Eurydice when she roams off in the grass; having lost her again and turning from all of the temptations which she and earthly pleasures represent, Orpheus retreats from the world and proves his new manhood by living a life of spiritual purity in devotion to God. As John Friedman puts it: "Orpheus becomes a monk."[109] Giovanni also changes the ending of the story such that Orpheus, having lost worldly happiness in exchange for spiritual joy, has now paradoxically regained Eurydice, or the happiness which spiritually-informed judgment now provides him. In Giovanni, then, Eurydice represents both earthly pleasures and newfound spiritual understanding, reflecting the binary signification of the feminine noted above.

[108] *Allegorie*, ed. Ghisalberti.
[109] Friedman, *Orpheus in the Middle Ages*, 123.

The *Allegorie*'s treatment of the Pygmalion/Myrrha/Atalanta sequence offers some telling alterations on the former accounts. While following initially Arnulf's commentary on the Pygmalion myth, Giovanni adds a new interpretation of Venus' answer to Pygmalion's prayer. While in Ovid, Pygmalion goes to the temple of Venus to offer a prayer only that he may have a wife like his ivory statue, and then is rewarded when the statue itself comes to life, Giovanni makes Pygmalion ask explicitly that the statue be given life. The commentator also provides an explicitly sexual gloss on Venus' intervention: "Sed Pigmalion rogavit deam Venerem ut converteret eam. Hoc est quod propter consuetudinem coeundi ipsa didicit se plicare et blandiri sicut alie. Et ideo dicitur de statua in feminam conversa" (But Pygmalion asked Venus to change her. This is because, on account of the custom of intercourse, she [the statue] learned to embrace and to be caressed as another. And thus she is said to have been converted from a statue into a woman; X.10). In his verse segment which follows, Giovanni further describes the statue as "edoctam," "schooled" by Venus (606). While frequently accentuating the religious import of tales, at times Giovanni offers erotic readings of myths in ways which some modern scholars have found inappropriate, and others, humorous.[110] While Giovanni generally adheres to the details Ovid provides for each of the other myths in book 10, here he provides a fairly graphic explanation for Pygmalion's ivory statue coming to life, which owes perhaps more to Arnulf's version:

> Dicunt quidam quod ille despiciebat omnes feminas propter turpitudinem. Unde fecit unam statuam eburneam femineam cum qua cepit dormire et ita spermatizabat cum ea tamquam cum femina unde dicitur conversa in feminam.
>
> Pigmalion statue se commiscebat eburne
> Quam dedit huic vivam pro muliere Venus.
>
> Certain people say that he disdained all women on account of their corruption. Thus he made a female ivory statue with whom he began to sleep and so he had intercourse with her as though with a woman, therefore she is said to have been changed into a woman.
>
> Pygmalion united himself with an ivory statue
> Which Venus gave, living, to him for a wife.[111]

[110] See Minnis, *Medieval Literary Theory*, 323.
[111] *Allegorie*, ed. Ghisalberti, X.10.

Arnulf had used the more circumspect "abutor" here: "eburneam fecit statuam cuius amorem concipiens ea cepit abuti ad modum vere mulieris" (he made an ivory statue, [and] desiring her, he began to make use of her after the fashion of a real woman). While Giovanni takes Pygmalion's infatuation with his statue a bit further than Ovid does, and discards Arnulf's modesty altogether, with the perhaps inadvertent result that Venus seems to reward Pygmalion here for his efforts in the goddess' service, in fact the Greek versions of the myth (such as that in Apollodorus' *Bibliotheca*) include such details; it is Ovid who has omitted them. It is difficult to say whether Arnulf or Giovanni had access to other (non-Greek) accounts of the myth.[112] However, although in Ovid the final transformation is undeniably sensual, Ovid also explores the themes of fantasy and reality, and the artist and his work, and so broadens the focus. Absent from Giovanni's account are some central Ovidian details: Pygmalion's love or infatuation for the statue and Venus' reward for Pygmalion's piety and his modesty in asking for something less than he really desires. Here, instead, Pygmalion's feelings and actions are only of an erotic nature and he simply becomes frustrated and asks the goddess for help. Venus complies, educating the statue in the arts of love, its *iocis*, sport. A further aspect of Giovanni's reading is that the statue receives life as a result of an act figured simply in sexual, and not any other terms. This may explain Giovanni's choice of the verb *spermitazabat* (had intercourse with, fecundated); thus Giovanni strips the myth of any of its more transcendent meanings, which otherwise locate the transformation within Pygmalion's love for her.[113] Giovanni's interest in the more sexual aspects of this myth suggests that he knew his audience: a crowd of enthusiastic university students. These students were clearly not only typical for their age, but they also appeared to have gained something of an upper hand over both the city of Bologna which financed this university, and even (however momentarily) over the Pope himself.

[112] For related, humorous nineteenth-century variations on Pygmalion, see Christopher Ricks, "Metamorphosis in Other Words," *Gower's 'Confessio Amantis': Responses and Reassessments*, ed. A. J. Minnis (Cambridge, 1983), 25–49.

[113] Here Giovanni reflects the Aristotelian model of human reproduction, widely accepted in the Middle Ages, according to which semen alone transmits life, and the male impresses form upon matter (female). Aristotle, *On the Generation of Animals*, trans. A. L. Peck (Cambridge, 1963), 729a11–b23; 737a8–34; cf. also Plutarch *Moralia* 48.145e; see also Thomas Laqueur, *Making Sex: Body and Gender from the Greeks to Freud* (Cambridge, 1990).

Giovanni's reading of the Myrrha tale is, like Arnulf's, largely drawn from Fulgentius, repeating the naturalistic interpretation of the myth. Elements of his verses on the Atalanta and Hippomenes tale come from John of Garland, ll. 415–18. In offering allegorical readings for the golden apples, Giovanni echoes Garland's "Nobilitas, species, sapientia sunt tria poma/Aurea . . ."; Giovanni describes the apples as "eloquium, forma, nobilitatis honor" (eloquence, beauty, the honor of nobility; 618), replacing *sapientia* (wisdom) with *eloquium.* Yet this time, like in Arnulf, the three graces are Hippomenes'; they are the means which "venerem inducunt" (induce sexual love; X.12). Again Giovanni's word choice reveals his slant: rather than the more all-embracing, and less pointedly erotic, *amorem,* he chooses *venerem.* Like Arnulf and Garland, Giovanni omits any reference to Hippomenes' failure to thank Venus; his version moves from Hippomenes' victory to the temple scene itself. Thus in this tradition, unlike in Ovid, the lovers are equally responsible for profaning Cybele's temple. It seems clear that for Giovanni, the more psychological aspects of Ovid are less important for his summary; it is a question not only of space but also of emphasis, as one can see from his recasting of the Medea and Pygmalion myths.

Another work of Giovanni's helps us gain a more complete picture of his perspectives on the feminine: a fragmentary narrative poem in a manuscript owned by Boccaccio.[114] Also written in Latin (Giovanni was skeptical of Dante's choice to compose the *Divine Comedy* in the vernacular), this 43-line excerpt presents an embattled queen making a desperate plea to the general of the garrison which has betrayed its own palace while it was under attack by enemies, setting fire to the palace itself. The scene evokes both the fall of Troy but also perhaps a variation on the siege of Thebes and the lament of the wives to Theseus.[115] Here Giovanni's audience seems not a group of undergraduates but perhaps the literary circle

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[114] Wicksteed and Gardner, *Dante and Giovanni del Virgilio*, 202–05, Carmen XI. The fragment is found in Medicaeo-Laurentian MS 29.8, with notations in Boccaccio's hand that further verses follow.

[115] In Statius' *Thebaid* XII.540–586, the widowed Argive women bring their case before Theseus after he returns with Hippolita, having conquered the Amazons, but they are not on the point of death before an oppressor, as in Giovanni's poem. Giovanni seems to draw on the general situation but instead places the queen and her ladies in a life-threatening situation at the hands of a garrison who have betrayed the palace.

in which Giovanni himself travelled (such authors as Albertino Mussato and Lovato Lovati). Highly rhetorical, if somewhat excessive, this speech nevertheless affords us a glimpse of Giovanni's construction of a female character's discourse. By way of background, it is not an exaggeration to say that Giovanni was writing during a time of civil strife; his own letters to Mussato make allusions to the political turmoil of 1317–20, when Giovanni's native Padua was being attacked by Can Grande della Scala. The queen in Giovanni's narrative poem, then, may give voice to concerns which were very real to Giovanni; her heroic, martyr-like stance in her request to the turncoat conqueror may reflect the embattled condition of Padua during the second and third decades of the fourteenth century. In this way, we can see Giovanni turning from the amatory and thus to his mind, less serious, episodes of the *Metamorphoses*, to the dire circumstances of wartime; and here he uses a feminine voice "to think with," reflecting the threat to Padua's freedom and independence from Rome. In some ways her speech evokes an Ovidian heroine's monologue, although because it is in the form of an appeal, it may be closer in form to one of the *Heroides*. Throughout the speech Giovanni draws on phrases from the *Metamorphoses* and the *Heroides*. The queen offers a plea that the soldier and his men will not put her and her ladies to death, even though their husbands have been slain. She enumerates the reasons they deserve mercy; only hunger drives them to beg for pity. The queen and her ladies are not Amazons, she argues: they do not bear "Amazonias . . . bipennes" (27); in *Metamorphoses* 12.611, Ovid uses a similar construction to refer to the Amazons' double-edged swords: "Thermodontiaca . . . bipenni" (the double-edged swords of Penthesilea's clan). In a line resonant with Ovidian wit, she says, "Crimen amor nostrum si crimen amare maritos" (Our crime is love if it is a crime to love husbands"; 29); in the *Heroides*, both Dido and Helen use similar language to their addressees. Dido asks of Aeneas in *Heroides* VII.164, "quod crimen dicis praeter amasse meum?"[116] (what crime can you charge me with but having loved?). In *Heroides* XVII.23, Helen says to Paris, "crimen erat nostrum, si delinita fuissem" (it was my fault, if I had been seduced); as in Giovanni, the "concession" here is only provided in a contrary-to-fact situation. The queen argues that they

[116] Ovid, *Heroides and Amores*, ed. Arthur Palmer (Cambridge, 1963).

should be saved precisely because they did not choose suicide themselves but rather had trust in the leader's "pietate notato" (well-known kindness; 36). Of the methods of suicide she lists, one is strangulation with the *zona*, the girdle or belt worn by women ("zonaque nos laqueis armabat"; 34);[117] in *Metamorphoses* 10. 378–79, Myrrha attempts suicide in this way ("laqueoque innectere fauces/destinat et zona summo de poste revincta"). The queen would weep, she says, but hunger has consumed even her tears (39–40). The speech ends as she somewhat melodramatically drops to the ground in exhaustion.

The speech is, as rhetoric and poetry, somewhat over the top; yet Giovanni himself was not exactly describing war and its effects in an entirely academic fashion. Details from the narrative fragment have contemporary resonances: Can Grande had set fire to numerous towns in his campaign; and perhaps even more tellingly, in 1324, the Duke of Carinthia was invited to be the vicar of Padua, but brought to Padua a "large army, ravaged all the country round . . . [and] returned to Carinthia, after having inflicted hroribe sufferings upon the Paduans and done no harm to their enemies." As Wicksteed and Gardner put it, Padua "suffered not less from friends than from foes."[118] The civil strife in Italy brought also about the exile of numerous individuals, including poets. Dante had been exiled in 1302; after teaching at Bologna between 1321 and 1323, Giovanni himself was exiled "for political reasons";[119] and Mussato, another poet whom Giovanni much admired, was exiled in 1325. The cry for mercy and freedom from a foe, and a city under seige, then, may have had some contemporary application for Giovanni at this period; if so, it is interesting that Giovanni would voice these concerns through a female captive, and with Ovidian rhetoric and wit. It was conventional for poets in fourteenth-century Italy to describe contemporary events through a type of allegory. Mussato had done exactly this in 1314 with his play *Ecerenis*. The play functioned as a "work with a powerful political message, telling of the fall of the tyrant of Padua

[117] The reference to the *zona* also alludes to Statius' detail (XII.527–28) of the "ignea gemmis cingula" (girdles glinting with gems) which lay amid the spoils of war Theseus brought back with him after his battles with the Amazons, but in Statius there is no reference to such girdles being used as Giovanni describes them.

[118] Wicksteed and Gardner, *Dante and Giovanni del Virgilio*, 54.

[119] Nancy G. Siraisi, *Arts and Sciences at Padua: the Studium of Padua before 1350* (Toronto, 1973), 52.

Ezzelino da Romano and warning against the dangers of domination by the rule of Verona, Cangrande della Scala."[120] Giovanni himself employs this type of political allegory in Carmen VI, his 1325 letter to the poet Mussato, which, through the fiction of pastoral verse, makes frequent reference to northern Italy's recent political struggles.[121] In his *Allegorie*, Giovanni reveals little interest in the feminine as Ovid has constructed her; he perhaps takes his cue too much from Garland's own version of Ovid's poem. In the fragment, however, Giovanni styles the speech of the queen after the manner of the Ovidian heroine, finding the feminine a helpful vehicle to safely express contemporary political concerns.

The foregoing commentaries on the *Metamorphoses*, from the eleventh through fourteenth centuries, show the heterogeneity of ways in which Ovid's heroines were read in the Middle Ages, and no doubt further research will unearth additional commentaries and further complicate our understanding of the ways that classical texts were read in this period. Fulgentius, for his part, depicts Eurydice positively through an etymological reading. Arnulf can reflect traditional dogma regarding the feminine propensity to sin, but elsewhere he shows himself indifferent to this tradition when another reading of the feminine or masculine suits his purposes. To Atalanta, for example, he attributes good judgment in a non-etymological reading. Arnulf, however, and Garland tend to present more limited constructions of the feminine through the moralizing readings they apply. Garland often mediates the feminine for his students through the "Bride of Christ"/ "Devil's Gateway" dichotomy. Yet the Latin editions of the *Metamorphoses*, such as Oxford, Bodleian Auctarium F.4.30, William of Orléans, and the "Vulgate," show a more impartial—and in the case of the "Vulgate," striking—interest in Ovid's heroines and their inward interrogations. The pedagogical motive behind the glossing in these texts frequently requires a more detached, non-moralizing, line-by-line assessment of Ovid's verse, thus revealing more of Ovid's accomplishments with psychological interiority. With the "Vulgate," we can see glimpses of the ways in which the *Metamorphoses* was

[120] Nicholas Mann, "The Origins of Humanism," in *The Cambridge Companion to Renaissance Humanism*, ed. Jill Kraye (Cambridge, 1996), 7; Roberto Weiss, *The Dawn of Humanism in Italy* (1947; reprinted, New York, 1970), 10.

[121] See Wicksteed and Gardner's commentary on Carmen VI, especially pages 249 55.

taught in thirteenth-century France: partly for its rhetorical features, perhaps for advanced students learning oratory. Here, somewhat strikingly, Ovid's heroines and their speech-making become the focus in the medieval classroom, as their extensive speeches illustrate a myriad of different oratorical and stylistic effects central to the teaching of rhetoric. Within a century, however, France produces an entirely different version of Ovid's poem, the *Ovide moralisé*, which reconstitutes the heroines' speeches for entirely different ends. The *Ovide moralisé* illustrates the moralizing tradition on Ovid's poem in the early fourteenth century: its method and treatment of Ovid's heroines are antithetical to much found in the "Vulgate," for example.[122] Heroines' monologues are duly incorporated into the French moralization, but at times the author of the *Ovide moralisé* alters the plot of Ovid's story so as to strengthen antifeminist readings of female characters' motivations. Furthermore, as in the case of Atalanta, the heroine's monologue may be censored for its more disruptive elements. Finally, Giovanni del Virgilio displays a readiness to focus on the sexual aspects of the myths he comments upon, in ways which are perhaps striking for Ovid commentaries of the early fourteenth century; in his *Allegorie* he reflects minimal interest in the plight of the Ovidian heroine, even in spite of the *Allegorie*'s comparatively brief length. Yet when in his own verse he turns to create a city—and a queen—betrayed and under siege, he employs aspects of the Ovidian heroine's lament for the queen's predicament and discourse in ways that suggest he was commenting upon Padua's embattled situation in the early fourteenth century. Here Giovanni finds that the feminine is "good to think with" (in Brown's and Zeitlin's phrase) and perhaps the only safe vehicle for expressing forms of dissent, at a period in Italy in which poets were being exiled for their political leanings. This type of diversity in the treatment of the feminine in *Metamorphoses* commentaries is manifested up through the early seventeenth century, as I will show in the following chapter.

[122] The "Vulgate" also includes allegorizing glosses such as Arnulf's; however, I am reporting the "Vulgate" commentator's own glosses in this chapter as they have received less attention by modern scholars.

CHAPTER FOUR

LATE MEDIEVAL AND EARLY MODERN READINGS OF THE FEMININE IN *METAMORPHOSES* 7 AND 10

In this chapter I will be discussing the works of four commentators and/or editors on Ovid's poem, from the middle of the fourteenth century through the early seventeenth century: those of Pierre Bersuire, Thomas Walsingham, Raphael Regius, and Jacob Pontanus. In the commentaries which follow, there is a steady amalgamation of prior commentary traditions on the *Metamorphoses*, to the extent that works like Walsingham's *Archana deorum* (c. 1400–10) and Regius' *Metamorphoses* (particularly in its sixteenth-century editions) at times seem largely composite works, presenting numerous successive interpretations for the same tale. But the commentaries produced in France, Venice, and Antwerp all carry the freight of their particular cultural moment, whether Bersuire's exegetical readings, Regius' humanist perspectives, or Pontanus' Jesuit sensibilities. At the same time, in each commentary Ovid's skill in depicting the heroine's struggle is recognized, albeit with different degrees of engagement.

Pierre Bersuire, Ovidius moralizatus, *1362*

Pierre Bersuire's *Ovidius moralizatus*, book 15 of his *Reductorium morale*, grew so popular that it was frequently copied and circulated independently from the longer work. Designed as a compendium for preachers wanting to cite classical exempla with a strongly moral interpretation, Bersuire's work shows the medieval exegetical commentary tradition in full flower. In book 10 of the *Ovidius moralizatus*, as in the rest of the work, Bersuire provides brief summaries of each of Ovid's *fabulae*, provides their literal meaning (*litteraliter*), and follows them with a sequence of allegorical and tropological interpretations, *naturaliter*, *historialiter*, and *spiritualiter* (most of which derive from Arnulf's *accessus*).[1] In the second redaction of his work (1362),

[1] Coulson, "Hitherto Unedited Medieval and Renaissance Lives of Ovid (I)," 160.

Bersuire also drew from the *Ovide moralisé* and the *Fulgentius metaforalis* in his rendering of Ovid's fables.[2]

The copy of Bersuire which I quote from here has a somewhat striking manuscript history, providing us a glimpse of the reception of Ovid in fifteenth-century England. I choose this manuscript (Oxford, Merton College MS 299) as its provenance places it in closer proximity to the commentary of Thomas Walsingham, which I will discuss next; Walsingham wrote his *Archana Deorum* c. 1400–1410 at St. Albans and drew extensively from Bersuire. Merton MS 299 (dated between approximately 1413 and 1415) is something of a rarity: a manuscript containing, among some of London schoolmaster John Seward's works on Latin verse, three separate commentaries on the *Metamorphoses*. According to V. H. Galbraith, Seward himself (1364–1435) may have assembled the volume.[3] Thomas Bloxham left it to Merton College upon his death in 1473; Bloxham's own name surfaces in a 1467 letter Thomas Daverse wrote to John Paston about Ovid. Daverse asks Paston, for whom Daverse is making a copy of "De Arte Amandi," to send his greetings to "Bloxham," among others at Oxford.[4]

In Merton 299, Ovid features prominently: Bersuire's work is placed first; towards the end is an anonymous, short, literal summary of the *Metamorphoses*;[5] and the final work is a copy of Garland's *Integumenta*.[6] One of Seward's own works on Latin prosody (the *Metristencheridion*) is dedicated to Richard Courtenay, bishop of Norwich. There is some doubt whether Seward in fact knew the bishop personally, the evidence for Seward in Norwich being patchy;[7] however, Courtenay himself was also interested in the Roman poet, having purchased a copy of an "Ovid" in Paris in 1414 for 80 crowns the

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2 Minnis, *Medieval Literary Theory*, 318; Moss, *Ovid in Renaissance France*, 23.

3 V. H. Galbraith, "John Seward and His Circle," *Mediaeval and Renaissance Studies* 1 (1941–43), 86.

4 *The Paston Letters and Papers of the Fifteenth Century*, ed. Norman Davis (Oxford, 1971), 2.379; McKinley, "Manuscripts of Ovid in England 1100–1500," 72–73.

5 Fols. 240r–279v.

6 McKinley, "Manuscripts of Ovid in England 1100–1500," 62–63. Another, more extensive collection of John Seward's works is found in University of Edinburgh Library, Laing MS 136. The Edinburgh MS, however, does not contain the works on Ovid. Exeter Cathedral, MS D & C 3521, also contains several of Seward's works (*Ludicra* and *Invecta*), but no Ovid. I am grateful to Peter Thomas for his help on this point.

7 Galbraith, "John Seward and His Circle," 95.

year before his death.[8] In addition, Seward was friends with the prior of St. Albans, Simon Southery, also a scholar and poet;[9] the circle widens here, as Southery was himself the dedicatee of Walsingham's commentary on Ovid, written at about the same time. As with many commentators, we have only traces of historical evidence about Seward's life. From his will, dated January 14, 1435, we know that he was married to a Matilda and had children; Galbraith speculates that Seward was "in minor orders—a suggestion apparently supported by two references in his letters addressed to Robert Swan, an agent at the Papal curia."[10] Seward taught Latin at Cornhill and seems to have been part of a group of London classicists:

> Just enough remains to show that this Seward group was a real centre of classical studies in London. Seward, Relyk, Sheffeld, Altham, Hoome, Anthony of Cornhill—all of them probably Oxford graduates—at least pursued Latin poetry with that "boundless intellectual enthusiasm" which Rashdall has called the most striking legacy of the mediaeval university.[11]

Galbraith observes the importance of Seward's work in that it offers proof of the interaction "between Latin studies in the cloister and the outside world."[12] Seward seems to have had a considerable interest in Ovid, as this manuscript makes plain; and although Seward was a teacher of Latin at Cornhill, the nature of the works contained in Merton MS 299 suggests that his intended audience was a highly educated one. If Seward did know the younger Courtenay, who died at the age of 35 in 1414, perhaps the volume was assembled either at the request of Courtenay or on the occasion of his death. The manuscript contains little to no marginal glossing, but it shows how Ovid commentaries had become something of an art form in London in the early fifteenth century. Furthermore, the manuscript bears witness to English interest in Ovid in the fifteenth century. It is worth remembering that, contrary to conventional wisdom on the medieval reception of Ovid (too often favoring the *Ars Amatoria*), in fifteenth-century England, copies of the *Metamorphoses* outnumbered

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[8] McKinley, "Manuscripts of Ovid in England 1100–1500," 72.

[9] Antonia Gransden, *Historical Writing in England c. 1307 to the Early Sixteenth Century* (Ithaca, 1982), 122.

[10] Galbraith, "John Seward and His Circle," 96.

[11] Ibid., 97.

[12] Ibid., 94.

those of the *Ars Amatoria*, and even the *Epistulae ex Ponto*, by two to one.[13] Seward's "Ovids" do not include an edition of the poem, but despite the apparent preference of Seward and perhaps Chaucer for the summarized Ovid, Latin editions of the poem were available in England at this time. Thomas Walsingham, although himself writing a summary of the *Metamorphoses*, clearly drew from a Latin edition of the poem, as he regularly incorporates key lines from episodes. Seward manifests an interest in the moralized Ovid; indeed, Bersuire's work is placed first in the collection.

For the most part Bersuire's interest in reading Ovid's tales is in presenting multiple layers of allegorization,[14] but occasionally he observes features of Ovid's narrative, such as the psychological turmoil of some of Ovid's heroines. Of the six major heroines' monologues in the *Metamorphoses* (those of Medea, Althaea, Scylla, Byblis, Myrrha, and Atalanta), Bersuire treats only the central four, omitting Medea's and Atalanta's. The four heroines he treats in depth feature taboo desire: Althaea desires to kill her son; Scylla, her father; Byblis desires her brother; Myrrha, her father. Medea and Atalanta, in contrast, are now striking for their non-incestuous heterosexual love, a subject which is thus elided to a large extent in Bersuire's work. As for Bersuire's apparent preoccupation with incest narratives, one might consider the ways in which the incest topos was treated in later medieval literature in general: Elizabeth Archibald observes that

> incest between siblings and between parents and children, already an established theme in literature and folklore, makes a more exciting story than incest between third cousins, and a much more awful warning. The incest theme seems to have come into fashion just at the time when the church was insisting on the scrutiny of relationships before marriage, on the awful sin incurred by those who married within the prohibited degrees, and on the separation of couples found to have broken the rules. In some cases the church may have deliberately produced stories with a central theme of incest as cautionary tales . . .[15]

[13] McKinley, "Manuscripts of Ovid in England 1100–1500," 80, Table 1. These figures are consistent from the high through the later Middle Ages in England: between 1100–1500, numbers of copies of the *Metamorphoses* double or even triple copies of Ovid's other works.

[14] On this see Minnis, *Medieval Theory of Authorship*, 142–43.

[15] Elizabeth Archibald, "Incest in Medieval Literature and Society," *Forum for Modern Language Studies* 25 (1989), 8-9.

Although Bersuire retells the basic elements of the Medea/Jason story, including Ovid's description of Medea's love rekindled at the sight of Jason, he does not devote space to her monologue.

In the case of Myrrha, Bersuire offers more extensive analysis. In relating Myrrha's quandary, he appears to follow the emphasis in the *Ovide moralisé*, which describes Myrrha's inner torment thus: "En son cuer ont mout grant bataille/Folie et raison entreprise" (in her heart is a very great battle, undertaken by foolishness and reason; 1157–58). Bersuire comments on Myrrha's turmoil:

> Ista igitur insano amore patrem diligens: sed de cubitu desperans secum flendo pulcherrime disputabat: et nunc pro se nunc contra se allegabat ex prohibitione paterni concubitus et naturem [sic] et deorum invidiam retorquebat. (fol. 78v–79r)[16]
>
> [Myrrha] therefore loving her father with a maddened love: but despairing, while weeping, she argued very excellently with herself about sleeping with him: and now she chose for herself, now against herself, and she retorted by blaming against nature and the jealousies of the gods the prohibition against intercourse with a father.

Here Bersuire employs the language of twelfth-century scholastic *disputatio* (*nunc pro se nunc contra se*) to characterize Myrrha's vacillations. For Myrrha's subsequent incest, Bersuire has a variety of readings to offer those who have taken orders: she represents the scheming cleric (*ambitiosum*, fol. 79r) who will stop at nothing to gain station within the church, or who would enter the church with evil intent. Alternatively Myrrha represents the soul which, having intercourse with the devil, is corrupted and gives rise to sins and vices ("cum quo est fornicata et male delectata: et vitiis impregnata fuit finaliter ab ipso persequitur," fol. 79v). In yet another reading, Myrrha becomes a figure of the Virgin Mary, who conceives Christ from her own father and holds her son within the bark, that is, within her own flesh. Bersuire quotes from Isaiah 7.14 to support this interpretation: "Ecce virgo concipiet et pariet" (behold, a virgin will conceive and bring forth; fol. 79v).

The tale of Venus and Adonis and the inset story of Atalanta illustrate further Bersuire's hermeneutics. As in the Myrrha episode,

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[16] Oxford, Merton College MS 299. For alternate manuscript readings, see those found in the 1509 edition, *Metamorphosis Ovidiana Moraliter... Explanata*, 1509 facsimile ed. by Stephen Orgel (New York, 1979).

Bersuire notes the inner dilemma of the heroine, as Atalanta debates whether or not to allow Hippomenes to beat her in the race:

> Cum vero plures sub hac lege conubium eius petissent: et victi capita perdidisset [sic]affuit Ypomenes iuvenis pronepos Neptuni qui lege contempta cursu contendit cum virgine et eius motus specie sperat insuperabilem superare. Virgo autem audacie compatiens suum dissuadebat coniugium. (fol. 80r; *Metamorphoses* 10.610)

> When therefore many had sought marriage with her under this law and, conquered, had lost their lives, Hippomenes approached, a young man, great-grandson of Neptune, who, scorning the law, strove in the race with the girl: and moved by her beauty he hoped to conquer the unconquerable one. But the girl, sympathizing with his boldness, tried to dissuade him from marrying her.

Bersuire's treatment of Atalanta's struggle is slight, yet he does capture the element of debate ("eius audaciae compatiens . . . dissuadebat") at work in her. For the race itself and the three golden apples, Bersuire offers some readings which are familiar, some not. First, interpreting the myth *litteraliter*, he adduces a reading of the virtuous woman who, though sought by many, successfully escapes them until she is finally sidetracked by a beautiful youth. Reading the myth *spiritualiter*, Bersuire says that the golden fruit are gifts and rewards which lead to the life of wanton behavior. Further he characterizes Atalanta in the passive voice when describing her sexual union with Hippomenes: when such sexual lust intervenes, "virgo a iuvene vincitur; et eius concubitu subarratur" (the virgin is conquered by the young man; and she is ploughed through his intercourse; fol. 80v). Bersuire then quotes Galatians 5.7, a rebuke to the runner who has gotten off his spiritual course: "Currebatis bene quis vos impedivit?" (you were running well; who impeded you?; fol. 80v). Clearly for Bersuire there exists a parallel between Atalanta's previously virginal state and the ideology of virginity so central to female sainthood in the Middle Ages. Had Atalanta run the race well, she would never have been distracted, either by love for Hippomenes or by sex with him. In Bersuire's reading, however, Hippomenes also comes in for blame; Bersuire refers to the class of "luxuriosos iuventulos" (fol. 80v) to which he belongs. Bersuire also offers readings of the *fabula* in which clerics desecrate the church through their corrupt behavior, and in which Atalanta represents the spirit which the devil (Hippomenes) pursues with temptations. He offers her the three golden apples, read as three delectable gifts: "divitias delicias et honores"

(wealth, delight, and honors; fol. 80v). As the soul is distracted by these, it slows in its race to accomplish good works. She is ultimately corrupted through the apples to the corresponding sins of greed, excess, and pride. Bersuire appears to be the first commentator to interpret the apples in this passage exclusively as temptations to sin.

Bersuire differs little from earlier commentators who tend to read the feminine as one of two extremes: in the Myrrha myth, we see Myrrha representing among other things an ambitious cleric, the corrupted soul, and the Virgin Mary. Atalanta for her part comes to signify an attractive female who is eventually distracted by a young man; and the soul which is initially pure but is led astray by the world's temptations. His treatment of heroines' interior monologues is brief, when they are addressed at all. As with the *Ovide moralisé*, Bersuire's allegorical readings and attendant Biblical references take up the great proportion of the narrative, with Ovid's tales told in summary form. Moss comments on the significance of Bersuire's work:

> The importance of [this way of reading Ovid] does not lie in the interpretations themselves, which as we have seen are not standardized and cannot provide us with any sort of key to equations made between pagan mythology and Christian concepts, but in the habits that are formed in both readers and writers. To regard a classical fable as veiled truth, necessarily open to interpretation on different levels, and to keep simultaneously in one's head several equally valid but self-contradictory "meanings" for a single text and make the equations between them, is an attitude of mind which remained with sixteenth-century writers and with their public long after the moralized Ovids themselves were forgotten.[17]

Bersuire's interests in Ovid's poem reside largely in mythological exempla as grounds for the multiply-layered moralized readings which his clerical audience could incorporate into sermons. The *Ovidius moralizatus* was especially popular during the years 1490–1520.[18] Yet as noted earlier, Bersuire's poem was banned in 1559 by the Church. Moss argues that the Church's position had more to do with new scholarly standards for classical texts than with simple disapproval over the mixing of sacred and secular; she states of the *Ovidius moralizatus* that

[17] Moss, *Ovid in Renaissance France*, 26.
[18] Ibid.

> its whimsical lack of historical decorum in adjusting meaning to myth, totally at variance with humanist critical standards, now made the spiritual mysteries it claimed to preach seem as trivial as the fables it did very little to illumine. It helps to measure the change in the intellectual climate of the sixteenth century to see how impossible it became within forty years to regard as an intelligent commentator on either Ovid or the spiritual life a writer who had done very well as both for so long.[19]

If Bersuire's work was to become dated by the mid-sixteenth century, it was nevertheless widely read and used in the fifteenth. Thomas Walsingham, who wrote a commentary on the *Metamorphoses* in the early fifteenth century, used Bersuire as a source text as much as a Latin edition of the *Metamorphoses* itself. Walsingham's own reading practices differ some from those of Bersuire, but in following Bersuire's Latin summary, Walsingham mediates Ovid's poem through the French cleric's own predilections.

Thomas Walsingham, Archana deorum, *c. 1400–1410*

For Thomas Walsingham, monk at St. Albans, poetry was not a matter of "foolish or vain trifles," and neither, apparently, were the psychological quandaries of the many heroines Ovid had immortalized in his *Metamorphoses.* By 1410, at the request of the prior Simon Southery, Walsingham had finished a Latin commentary, the *Archana deorum,* on Ovid's poem;[20] it is the first commentary on the *Metamorphoses* written in England for whom we know the author. In fact, Walsingham himself is known best to modern scholars as one of the main chroniclers of Richard II's reign in late medieval England; yet little attention has been given to Walsingham's considerable interest in classical authors.

Galbraith has shown that figures like Walsingham and Seward were part of a larger circle of classicists in England at this time. Galbraith argues that English humanism may have had its beginnings with John Wethamstede, who was abbot at St. Albans (1420–1440) and who traveled to Italy; he attributes Wethamstede's knowledge

[19] Ibid., 27.
[20] On this relationship see Galbraith, "John Seward and His Circle," 93–94.

of the classics to Walsingham.[21] Southery seems to have played a part in this circle, though at St. Albans; he was also the dedicatee of Seward's work, *Somnium*, written in 1409.[22] Walsingham himself was a man of contradictions, as the pendulum of 20th-century scholarship on him shows. In 1937 Galbraith had the highest praise for Walsingham's scholarly acumen; in 1998 Paul Strohm found Walsingham's historiography hopelessly suspect.[23] It is out of the range of this study's purposes to engage that particular debate in depth here; but clearly, in order for one to understand Walsingham's reading and interpretive practices fully, his use of sources in his chronicles must also be considered. Several examples will suffice to illustrate Walsingham's alternation between credulity and hard-nosed scholarship. In his chronicles for the year 1405, Walsingham dutifully records that a dragon had allegedly "appeared near Sudbury in Suffolk."[24] Often he also demonstrates the theocentric tendency of medieval historiography, as when he attributes the murder of Robert Hawley in Westminster Abbey in 1378 to God's revenge for the murder of Thomas Becket; or when he sees natural occurrences as portents. A dolphin in the Thames becomes an "omen of the trouble between Richard II and the Londoners in 1392."[25] Yet many events in Walsingham's chronicles can be verified against other extant sources. Galbraith for his part also praises Walsingham's ability to procure and include the texts of many key political and ecclesiastical documents, some of which were somewhat dangerous for a Benedictine monk to chronicle (such as his testimony on the Councils of Pisa and Constance). Walsingham incorporated the texts of the surrender of Aberystwyth in 1407 and Prince Henry's signet letter of 1412, two historical documents not recorded elsewhere.[26] Between the extremes of Galbraith

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[21] V. H. Galbraith, ed., *The St. Albans Chronicle 1406–1420*, (Oxford, 1937), xlv. But see R. Weiss, *Humanism in England during the Fifteenth Century* (Oxford, 1967), 31.

[22] Galbraith, "John Seward and His Circle," 94.

[23] Galbraith, ed., *The St. Albans Chronicle 1406–1420*, xxii. Paul Strohm, *England's Empty Throne: Usurpation and the Language of Legitimation, 1399–1422* (New Haven, 1998), 82–83.

[24] The dragon was huge, had a "crested head, serrated teeth, and a tail of excessive length"; it killed a shepherd and numerous sheep; furthermore, "arrows rebounded [noisily] from its metal scales, but they did scare it into flight—it vanished into the marshes never to be seen again." Gransden, *Historical Writing*, 127. I have made some modifications on Gransden's translation of this passage.

[25] Gransden, *Historical Writing*, 130.

[26] Galbraith, *The St. Albans Chronicle*, xxii.

and Strohm, Antonia Gransden and Richard Firth Green[27] offer more cautious assessments, recognizing both Walsingham's providential view of history, his anti-Lollard sentiment, but also his scholarly *method* as a compiler. It is this method, I would argue, which not only recuperates more of the text of Ovid's poem, but also, as a result—restores to the Ovidian heroine some of her original voice.

The *Archana deorum* stands as a useful index of the reception not only of Ovid's works in late medieval England, but also of Ovid's representations of female subjectivity in the middle books of the *Metamorphoses.* I am particularly interested here in the way that forms of "classicism" or pre-humanism in late medieval England either impeded or facilitated an awareness of Ovid's representations of the feminine. Walsingham's prologue offers the rationale for his work:

> Et hunc quidem libentius assumpsi laborem ut grammaticis nostris satisfacerem qui dicunt res poeticas figmenta frivola sive vana, et non nonnullos intrare volentes ad cognoscendum poemata non permittunt, cum ipsi nec intrent nec sint habiles ad intrandum . . . laboravi diligentius ad assignandum tam rationabiles causas quam utiles singulis poete fabulis . . . videant quidem fructum quem prius non gustaverant inesse rebus poeticis et confundantur invidi qui nobis detrahebant igneque ruboris et verecundie conflagrentur. (fol. 9v)

> And indeed I took on this work fairly willingly, that I might convince our grammarians who say that poetry is foolish or vain trifles, and they do not allow some people willing to embark upon understanding poetry, since they themselves do not attempt it, nor are they suited for attempting it. . . . I have labored more carefully to assign causes as reasonable as [they are] useful for the poet's individual fables . . . let them indeed see fruit which they previously had no inkling existed in poetry; and let the envious be confounded who used to disparage us and let them burn with the fire of disgrace and shame.[28]

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[27] Richard F. Green, "John Ball's Letters: Literary History and Historical Literature," in *Chaucer's England: Literature in Historical Context*, ed. Barbara Hanawalt (Minneapolis, 1992), 176–200.

[28] Throughout I quote from Oxford, St. John's College, MS 124. An edition of this text has been provided by Robert van Kluyve, *Thomae Walsingham de Archana deorum* (Durham, 1968); however, this edition contains some flaws in transcription, including the error in the title, which should read "de Archanis deorum." See review by A. G. Rigg, *Speculum* 44 (1969): 501–04. Galbraith, however, adopts the title "Archana deorum" from the prologue (*The St. Albans Chronicle*, xli). Another copy of Walsingham's work on Ovid is found in London, British Library, Lansdowne MS 728 (fols. 16r–175v); see J. Engels, *Vivarium* 6 (1968): 102–07. I am grateful to Frank Coulson for alerting me to the existence of the Lansdowne MS.

Whether Walsingham is addressing a particular group of detractors, it is difficult to say: he is drawing on imagery from Isaiah 26.11: "Domine exaltetur manus tua et non videant videant et confundantur zelantes populi et ignis hostes tuos devoret" (Oh Lord, may your hand be exalted and let the blind see,and let the envious be confounded and let fire consume your enemies).[29] What is most notable here is Walsingham's anxiety to justify poetry as a "reasonable" and "useful" enterprise; this very brief reference offers only a glimpse of his rationale for the *Archana deorum*. Walsingham's treatment of the heroines of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* is remarkable in the commentary tradition for its emphasis on exclusively historical and naturalistic readings, but above all for its deliberate recuperation of sections of Ovid's own text. More than many commentators Walsingham manifests a keen sensitivity to Ovid's irony and to his most psychologically dramatic episodes, often allowing them to speak for themselves. The *Archana deorum* is, in the context of other contemporary *Metamorphoses* commentaries, an excellent illustration of the "heterogeneity" of the medieval commentary tradition.[30]

Walsingham's *Archana deorum* is typically medieval in its approach to its Ovidian text only in some ways. Walsingham patterned his commentary on the *Metamorphoses* after the form of Bersuire's *Reductorium morale*, copying his system of prefacing his commentary with a lengthy treatise on the gods and each of the subsequent books with summaries of contents. The *Archana deorum* is a summary of and commentary on the *Metamorphoses*, rather than a complete edition of the poem accompanied by commentary (like the "Vulgate" commentary c. 1250, or Raphael Regius' edition in 1493). In some respects Walsingham reflects the medieval moralizing tradition, routinely incorporating excerpts from Arnulf of Orléans, the third Vatican Mythographer, Bersuire's commentary, and other previous commentaries on the *Metamorphoses*, yet his work devotes much greater attention to full, reliable plot summary than does either that of Giovanni del Virgilio (1322–23) or the *Ovide moralisé* (1316–28). Galbraith who,

[29] *Biblia Sacra iuxta Vulgatam Versionem*, ed. R. Weber (Stuttgart, 1994).

[30] For a discussion of the heterogeneity of the medieval *accessus* tradition, see A. J. Minnis, "Latin to Vernacular: Academic Prologues and the Medieval French Art of Love," in *Medieval and Renaissance Scholarship: Proceedings of the Second European Science Foundation Workshop on the Classical Tradition in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance* (Leiden, 1997), 154–56.

more than any other scholar, has studied Walsingham's work in depth, remarks that "there runs through [his] classical compilations an unmistakable enthusiasm for his subject, which is absent from the later part of his history"; he also speaks of the "astonishing . . . verbal memory of a variety of classical authors" in the *St. Albans Chronicle*.[31] In contrast to earlier summaries of the *Metamorphoses*,[32] Walsingham's shows much greater interest in incorporating actual excerpts from Ovid's poem; although his work is far from a critical edition, it shows an impulse to represent more fully the Latin text of Ovid which he was using. As Robert van Kluyve has demonstrated, Walsingham regularly omits Bersuire's "scriptural allusion[s] and all his moral, allegorical, and spiritual comments" on Ovid's myths, including only Bersuire's natural and historical readings.[33]

Repeatedly Walsingham incorporates sections of Ovid's poem which Bersuire had omitted; he appears to manifest a hermeneutic that the later humanist John Colet at Oxford in 1496 would apply to the interpretation of Biblical texts in groundbreaking fashion:

> Colet stripped away the apparatus of scholastic biblical study—the "luxuriant growth of dialectical and dogmatic glosses": the commentaries, summas, notes, summations of commentaries, and disputed questions—and went straight to the original text itself. . . . [By this time the Bible] was not simply surrounded by, it was all but overwhelmed by notes and commentaries: the apparatus visually as well as intellectually dominated the text.[34]

Walsingham is clearly not, like Colet, focusing exclusively on his source text; however, certain facts need to be recognized: he routinely omits Bersuire's moralizing and spiritual exegeses, and his summary of Ovid's text is as long, if not longer because its inclusion of actual dialogue, than the accompanying "expositiones." Antonia Gransden has argued that Walsingham was concerned with the question of objectivity in his historical writings.[35] More recently, by contrast,

[31] Galbraith, *The St. Albans Chronicle*, xlv, vi.

[32] For example, those of Arnulf of Orléans, John of Garland, and Pierre Bersuire.

[33] van Kluyve, ed., *Archana deorum*, xiv.

[34] Richard Schoeck, "Humanism in England," in *Renaissance Humanism: Foundations, Forms, and Legacy*, ed. Albert Rabil Jr. (Philadelphia, 1988), 8–9.

[35] Gransden, *Historical Writing*, 149. She observes, "Walsingham expounded at length the tenets of John Wyclif and his followers, because he believed in stating even opponents' views." Gransden provides other evidence of Walsingham's "rational" analysis of events in his historiography (151).

Strohm has illustrated the partiality of Walsingham's writing in the chronicles.[36] Walsingham may have been a monk much given in his other works to moralizing and to attacks on Wycliffite sedition, yet his reworking of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* manifests a keen eye for accuracy in paraphrasing and a sensitivity to the psychological landscape which Ovid sought to explore. Walsingham's work was not the first commentary to give extended emphasis to Ovid's strong interest in the depictions of "feminine" interiority, but from surviving evidence it appears to have been the first such in England.

In the *Metamorphoses*' central books, heroines such as Medea (book 7), Althaea and Scylla (8), Byblis (9), and Myrrha and Atalanta (10) receive extended focus. Walsingham's choices in representing these heroines reveal much about his own predilections as a cleric and, perhaps, those of Southery. Each heroine is embroiled in a psychological and emotional conflict; all but Althaea are tormented by a love relationship (Althaea battles over maternal love or revenge). As noted above, three heroines experience taboo desire: Althaea, Byblis, and Myrrha. Of the three heroines engaged in non-incestuous or non-taboo love relationships with a male beloved, only one receives full focus (Scylla); in the case of Medea and Atalanta, Walsingham passes over the extended monologue in Ovid's text. In his rendering of Ovid's heroines, Walsingham usually follows Bersuire's lead: the French cleric himself, like some of his predecessors, had cut the monologues of Medea and Atalanta while giving more attention to the heroines engaged in a "monstrous" passion. Unfortunately Walsingham's adoption of Bersuire's narrative preferences perpetuates a medieval view of woman as uncontrolled carnality and irrationality. However, despite these choices, Walsingham adds quotations from Ovid's poem which open out the narrative representation of the heroine's intentionality and inner landscape. In the following passages I will be looking specifically at the Ovidian text Walsingham himself adds, as an index of his own purposes with the *Archana deorum*.

While it is clear that Walsingham had to hand commentaries of Arnulf, Bersuire, and the third Vatican Mythographer, it is also plain that he is drawing just as fully from a Latin edition of Ovid's poem. Walsingham mediates Ovid's poem through the multiple layers of moralizing tradition which have grown up around this poem; yet he

[36] Strohm, *England's Empty Throne*, 78, 82–83.

endeavors to give the reader greater access to the actual text of Ovid's poem as well. Since Walsingham composed this work in Latin, it seems clear that his reader could have read the Latin text of Ovid's poem; Walsingham's decision to provide a summarizing commentary instead, one which was no shorter than the original text, illustrates one hermeneutics of reading classical texts in later medieval England. Although short Latin summaries and some complete Latin editions of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* were available to the educated reader at this time in England, the preference was still for the accurate paraphrase which provided a full "apparatus" of the tradition of moralized commentaries.[37] Derek Pearsall, in discussing Chaucer's Latinity, explains the late medieval preference for contemporary Latin summaries of classical authors: "It was an intelligent and busy man's short cut, the simpler syntax of medieval Latin prose presenting far fewer problems than classical verse."[38] For this reason, if Walsingham's work represents the state of the art in early fifteenth-century *Metamorphoses* commentaries in England, his incorporation of even sections of Latin dialogue from the *Metamorphoses* would seem to be an advance, a movement toward the critical edition. That is, the "digested" Ovid seems to have prevailed as the form of choice at this time; thus what Walsingham offers the reader from the Latin text of the *Metamorphoses* is significant in that it foregrounds the more psychological passages from Ovid often glossed over or omitted in existing Latin summaries of the poem. Although Walsingham omits Medea's monologue, he does, unlike most commentators, recognize the flight segment as just that—a separate episode in Ovid's narrative; it (with all of its constituent mythological allusions) makes up the "tertia fabula" in book 7 of the *Archana deorum* (fol. 79r). To explore more fully the nature of Walsingham's hermeneutics, I will look closely at his recasting of the characters of Scylla, Myrrha, and Atalanta.

Scylla, from book 8 of the *Metamorphoses*, provides a further example of Walsingham's readings of Ovidian "female" interiority. Bersuire in his recasting of the myth summarizes quickly the actions of her betrayal and passes over her inner reflections before she visits Minos. Walsingham extends the narrative by incorporating more of the psychological drama as she makes her decision. Although her crime will

[37] On the medieval tendency to paraphrase classical texts, see Galbraith, *The St. Albans Chronicle*, xli.

[38] Derek Pearsall, *The Life of Geoffrey Chaucer* (Oxford, 1992), 32.

be patricide, Walsingham is less interested in the moral or spiritual implications than in Ovid's rendering of Scylla's inner deliberations. Of her inward speech Walsingham comments "apud se sic tacite iudicabat" (within herself thus silently she determined; fol. 89v); the "Vulgate" commentator makes at least three separate notations about Scylla's speaking to herself (Austin MS 34, fols. 67v and 68r), but whether Walsingham used a copy of the "Vulgate" is not easy to say. A commentator could certainly observe Scylla's interior monologue without the help of the "Vulgate"; however, often a later commentator who remarks upon the Ovidian heroine's inward speech (such as Regius) draws from the "Vulgate." Walsingham then quotes a line from Scylla's monologue, "Iusta gerit certe pro nato bella perempto" (surely [Minos] wages a just war on behalf of his murdered son; fol. 89v). Walsingham quotes the lines detailing her trip into Minos' camp with the lock, and then her speech as she offers it (and herself) to him. Significantly, although Walsingham does not include much of Scylla's monologue, he does include her final accusation toward Minos once he has reviled her: "meritorum oblite meorum" (forgetful of my deserved thanks; fol. 90r), a line revealing Ovid's emphasis on the irony of Minos' actions. Given the antifeminist readings of Scylla's anarchic behavior which would have been very possible for this myth, Walsingham's version of it is notably impartial toward Scylla. In contrast, Chaucer presents the story in the *Legend of Good Women* in a way which, through its distorted sympathy, finally highlights Scylla's criminality.

Walsingham's rendering of the Myrrha episode (*Metamorphoses* 10.298–502) provides another example of his divergent interests. He swiftly provides a one-line summary of Myrrha's "illicito . . . amore" for her father Cinyras. He then captures succinctly her inner turmoil over such desire and quotes her statement from Ovid: "Et cum sepe suis conceptibus repugnasset, dixit intra se de ipsa, 'Tune eris et matris pelex et adultera patris? Tune soror nati genitrixque vocabere fratris?'" (And when she had fought against her own thoughts, within she said of herself: "Will you be both your mother's rival and your father's adulteress? Will you be named your son's sister and your brother's mother?" fol. 113v). Here Walsingham incorporates a portion from her monologue (10.347–48) that is most characteristic of Ovid in its irony and wit as well as in its depiction of the heroine's own self-awareness. Walsingham also singles out and paraphrases

Ovid's description of her inner battle: *repugnasset, dixit intra se de ipsa.* Bersuire himself had used the language of scholastic *disputatio*, within a context of condemnation, to characterize Myrrha's vacillations (*nunc pro se nunc contra se*; now [she chose] for herself; now against herself; Merton MS 299, fol. 79r). Walsingham then adds some of the dialogue from Myrrha's conversation with her father, in which she admits to an unsuspecting father her wishes that her suitor could be like him. Again Walsingham senses Ovid's irony, quoting her father's innocent reply, "Esto tam pia semper" (always be so loyal; fol. 113v), and then quoting Ovid to characterize the shame which overcomes Myrrha. Walsingham's summary follows Ovid's narrative closely as he describes the nurse's discovery of Myrrha's attempted suicide and the subsequent arrangements. But while Ovid has Myrrha and her father meeting on many nights (10.471–73), Walsingham has Cinyras ask to see her just after their second night. Bersuire has Cinyras discovering her identity after a more general "lapsu temporis" (passage of time; Merton MS 299, fol. 79r). Walsingham may have altered this detail because his text of the poem had a faulty reading of this line, or because he wanted to sanitize Ovid's account. In either case, the *Archana deorum* presents us with a more respectable Cinyras than we find in Ovid. For one thing, it passes on the reading found in the *Ovide moralisé*, in which the nurse gets Cinyras drunk before she informs him of the "young woman" who desires him (in Ovid Cinyras is already drunk; 10.438). Yet Walsingham also describes the nurse as "malifica" (fol. 113v), "vicious" or even "criminal," an adjective not appearing in Bersuire. Here Walsingham appears to draw on Ovid's description of the nurse as *male sedula* (obtrusive, excessively solicitous, 10.438). Walsingham's inclusion of this detail is significant, for in Ovid Myrrha's reluctance to act on her desire is strongly emphasized. Walsingham departs from Bersuire, recognizing the nurse's central responsibility in arranging Myrrha's liaisons with her father. The *Archana deorum* appears to be rare among commentaries in attributing blame to the nurse. Walsingham omits Bersuire's flurry of condemnatory words regarding Myrrha's actions ("insanus," "turpitudo," "crimen"), whereas the other (anonymous) Latin summary of the poem in Merton 299 heaps disapproving words throughout its version of the story (fol. 257v). Despite the range of "unnatural acts" some Ovidian heroines commit (murder and incest), however, Walsingham's strongest condemnation of a character in the *Metamorphoses*

actually falls on Tereus, after he has raped Philomela and cut out her tongue.[39]

Walsingham follows Ovid very closely for the remainder of the Myrrha story; then he incorporates the third Vatican Mythographer's commentary on the poem which again slightly alters the details. In Ovid, the goddess Lucina has pity on Myrrha, now transformed into a myrrh tree whose sides are swelling with the baby Adonis, and enables the bark to open so that Adonis may be born; in the third Vatican Mythographer, it is Cinyras who strikes the myrrh tree with his sword, "pater gladio percussisset" (fol. 114r), causing Adonis to be born; then begins the Third Vatican Mythographer's naturalistic reading of myrrh and its origins in the ancient world. In neither Bersuire nor Walsingham is any mention made of Ovid's own paradoxical ending to the myth, in which Myrrha's tears (now the tree's sap) bring honor to her (*est honor et lacrimis*, there is honor even for tears; 10.501). It was perhaps too much for a medieval commentator's sensibilities to connect the idea of *honor* with acts of incest. In Walsingham's account, despite the occasional moralizing readings he appends, we can see a pronounced interest in the most dramatic and psychologically compelling of the events of Ovid's story; in the dialogue he chooses to quote, he shows a keen sensitivity to Ovid's insightful explorations of human relationships, desire, and motivation. Yet in his treatment of gender here, Walsingham echoes some commentaries in their tendency to favor Cinyras over Myrrha. In Ovid and in Walsingham, the question of Myrrha's subjectivity is troubling; she appears to be exploited by the nurse, who is herself exploited in classical tradition to pander to a type of readerly voyeurism: a glimpsing of the taboo sexual act.[40] Despite Myrrha's relative lack of personal agency, Walsingham works to incorporate some details of her internal turmoil which Ovid had developed at length. As often, Ovid's "project" offers only partial successes in the representation of the heroine's subjectivity. As Debora Shuger has shown, the highly rhetoricized laments from Ovid's *Heroides* informed medieval and early modern renderings of Mary Magdalene,[41] herself a somewhat problematic figure of the feminine.

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[39] Bersuire for his part legitimizes Tereus' mutilation of the heroine by characterizing Philomela's tongue as now "incestuous"—thus presumably requiring removal.

[40] Knox, "Scylla's Nurse," 158–59.

[41] Debora Shuger, *The Renaissance Bible* (Berkeley, 1994), chap. 5.

Walsingham's treatment of the Atalanta story will serve as a final example of his readings of the Ovidian heroine. Although van Kluyve attributes Walsingham's summary of the events of the story to Pierre Bersuire,[42] on close analysis, Walsingham has added in details which reflect his own sense of the story. Where Bersuire sums up Atalanta's setting of the conditions for the race, Walsingham offers a very close paraphrase of her words in Ovid: "Non sum potiunda, inquit, nisi prius pedum fuero victa cursu. Et ideo qui contendere mecum vultis pedibus contendite ea lege, ut si ego victa fuero, uxor fiam. Si alias, mors erit premium tardis" ("I am not to be won," she said, "unless I am conquered first in a race. And therefore you who want to contend with me on foot, contend, but under this condition: that if I am beaten, I will become your wife. If otherwise, death will be the prize for the slow"; fol. 115r). Although Walsingham omits her later monologue, he does provide these decisive words. And where Venus will go on to comment that Atalanta was "inmitis" (harsh, unyielding, 10.573), Walsingham takes a more sympathetic view of the runner, attributing harshness only to the rules ("Hec lex . . . dura"; fol. 115r) of the race themselves in the very next sentence. Venus may comment negatively on Atalanta's lack of pity, but Ovid's larger treatment of the myth opens out Atalanta's plight as first of all a woman unjustly doomed; her moving monologue itself bears witness to Ovid's interest in the difficulties she herself faces. When Hippomenes comes to the track to watch this *cursus . . . iniqui* (unfair race), although he sees others lose their lives, he is captivated by her and wants to compete; he then calls out to her, challenging her to a race. Ovid has Hippomenes boast of his lineage, saying that she will receive honor even for beating someone of his stature; Walsingham sums this up with Hippomenes calling out *cum ingenti audacia* (with remarkable boldness; fol. 115v). In both Ovid and Walsingham, Hippomenes' verbal challenge to Atalanta provokes her inward confusion. Walsingham sums up the monologue which Bersuire completely excises, in the following phrase: "Que videns eius speciositatem et considerans generositatem" (She seeing his good looks and considering his nobility/high spirits; fol. 115v). The shutting down of the Ovidian heroine's monologue is a telling editorial choice on the part of both Bersuire and Walsingham. However, Walsingham does attempt in

[42] van Kluyve, ed., *Archana Deorum*, 157.

the above phrase to recover a minute portion of what was lost, and he aptly uses it to preface Ovid's assessment of Atalanta's inner quandary: "iam dubitare cepit utrum mallet eum vincere vel ab eo vinci" (now she began to doubt whether she preferred to beat him or be beaten by him; fol. 115v; Plate 3). It is noteworthy that even when Bersuire omits much of the heroine's inner landscape, he will at times be forced to include at least a reference to her inner battle, as with Myrrha, above (Merton MS 299, fol. 79r). When Walsingham himself makes space for such details, however, it is generally not in the service of some larger antifeminist point, on the shifting nature of women, for example. In this myth Walsingham seems to capture some of Ovid's compassion on the figure of Atalanta.

As their race begins and Atalanta easily passes Hippomenes, he seeks Venus' aid. Venus provides him with the three golden apples, meant to divert Atalanta from the race track. While Bersuire sums up the episode of the three apples, concluding with Hippomenes' victory, Walsingham pauses in the sequence to recapture some of the psychological and emotional turmoil Atalanta experiences (what would also have been expressed in her monologue) by loosely quoting from Ovid. Once the race has begun and Atalanta is on the point of passing Hippomenes, she pauses to look at him: "At virgo sepe cum pertransire posset morata est ad spectandum vultus iuvenis" (But often when the girl could pass him, did she delay to look at the youth's face"; 10.661–62; fol. 115v). Walsingham's inclusion of Atalanta's hesitancy and emotional turmoil restores to the story some of what Bersuire's cursory account elides. For Atalanta, marriage to Hippomenes will involve the loss of her life; Hippomenes himself hazards such a loss as well by merely taking part in this doomed race. Eventually, Hippomenes does prevail, by means of the third golden apple, and leaves the race course with Atalanta. As William Anderson notes, again in Ovid (unlike in his sources) there is no emphasis on the greed which draws Atalanta toward the golden fruit; she is simply distracted.[43] In the final events of the story, when Atalanta and Hippomenes desecrate Cybele's temple as Venus' indirect means of punishing them, it is worth considering the contemporary *Ovide moralisé*'s readings, even though Walsingham himself does

[43] Anderson, *Ovid's "Metamorphoses": Books 6–10*, 530 nn. 666, 667.

not appear to draw much from the work. In the French poem, as we have seen, while Venus is angered by Hippomenes' failure to show gratitude for her aid, she does not (as she does in Ovid) herself afflict Hippomenes with lust for Atalanta. Thus the lovers are more defiant in their irreverence towards Cybele's deity by making love in her temple, and Cybele appears more just in punishing both (transforming them into lions). Both Bersuire and Walsingham, however, observe Venus' part in instigating the sexual passion, following Ovid's account. Most commentators on the myth end by roundly condemning this wanton sexual behavior; Walsingham concludes with Arnulf's readings of the myth, which are initially largely etymological. When Arnulf arrives at the three apples, he interprets them as "sapientia, pulcritudo, nobilitas" and goes on to comment that these virtues in Hippomenes, finally, were what made Atalanta allow herself to be conquered (Quibus . . . consideratis se ab eo vinci permisit; having considered these attributes . . . she allowed herself to be beaten by him; *Allegorie* 10.10; *Archana deorum*, fol. 116r). Walsingham adopts Arnulf's reading, which is, given previous commentaries' assessments, notably uncondemning towards their behavior in the temple; it furthermore attributes good judgment to Atalanta (something evident in her suppressed monologue as well).

It would be rash to claim that Walsingham's *Archana deorum* is typical of commentaries on Ovid's *Metamorphoses* written in late medieval/early modern England, since surviving evidence offers an incomplete picture. It would also be untrue to argue that Walsingham's work falls outside of the "moralizing" tradition of Ovid commentaries; rather, his work reflects the "dialogic" nature of medieval commentaries, in which rivalling interpretations are presented for the reader's consideration. Walsingham, writing at the prior's request, may wish to legitimize his own commentary on Ovid by flanking it with excerpts from Bersuire, theThird Vatican Mythographer, and Arnulf; yet his own version of Ovid offers an entirely different hermeneutic, one showing considerable accuracy in reflecting Ovid's own emphases and a persistent fascination with the dramatic episode. The *Archana deorum* offers us a glimpse of one very "bookish" monk's readings of Ovid's mythological heroines in early fifteenth century England, and with sometimes surprising results. In some passages Walsingham clearly departs from the interpretive approach of his predecessors and replaces their summaries with his own version of Ovid's tales.

In some ways what Walsingham had achieved in restoring something of the Ovidian heroine's interiority was lost by Caxton's translation of Ovid in 1480. Although the fifteenth-century *Ovide moralisé* incorporates Atalanta's monologue, for example, it also interjects a fit of antifeminist pique in its assessment of Atalanta's shifting thoughts, as noted in the last chapter. In view of the somewhat gloomier contribution Caxton makes to the reception of the Ovidian heroine in early modern England, then, Walsingham's earlier work is all the more remarkable.

Walsingham does participate in medieval "habits of thought" by adopting Bersuire's narrative choices, some of which are themselves antifeminist (such as the undue focus on heroines in incest narratives). But in many cases Walsingham's representation of the Ovidian feminine landscape simply shows a lack of interest in received misogynist commentary, rather than active dissent against it—or even thoughtful problematizing of it. That is, Walsingham's own Latin in the *Archana deorum* shows a certain freedom from the constraints of prevailing medieval ideologies of gender—or may open the question just how prevailing they were, in regular reading practice. Much further work needs to be done in the case of commentaries, to determine just how *mono*-logic a language Latin really was in the Middle Ages; that it was the predominantly language of the fathers is without a doubt—but that all the "fathers" or authors using it in the Middle Ages uniformly participated (consciously or subconsciously) in a polarizing hermeneutic with regard to the feminine, is a much larger, and I would wager, a much less tenable, claim. *Many* did; not all. And often the same commentator might offer a polarizing view of the feminine in some passages, but not in others.

Walsingham's own recasting of Ovid's text is strikingly free from the types of moralizations which characterize Bersuire; indeed at times Walsingham cuts the more negative readings of the heroine which silence her and instead suggests an impartial or sympathetic reading of her. Most telling are Walsingham's additions of lines from the *Metamorphoses*, those in particular which restore some of the heroine's inner voice or the depiction of her inner quandaries. As Roberto Weiss observes:

> it is of much importance when assessing the outlook towards the classics of an English scholar of the fifteenth century to take into account the amount of his independence from the old prejudices, and to find out whether an ancient work is regarded as a source of facts, or as a

work of art from which inspiration of an aesthetic and stylistic nature could be derived.[44]

Walsingham's motivation for the inclusion of these passages appears to be "aesthetic and stylistic," since often the psychological elements of Ovid's characterization fall to the medieval cutting room floor. Ovid's significant contributions in constructing heroines of psychological depth and complexity are recovered in some measure in Walsingham's compilation; Walsingham may be conventionally medieval in his paraphrasing of the classical *auctor*, but he also rids himself of the shackles of Bersuire's moralizations. Above all, in his evident interest in Ovid's psychologically complex episodes, he restores to the heroine some of the voice and introspection which Ovid originally gave her.[45]

Raphael Regius, in Metamorphosin Ovidii enarrationes *(1493)*

Raphael Regius' commentary on Ovid's *Metamorphoses* was the most popular early printed edition of the poem.[46] Regius was a lecturer in rhetoric and poetry at Padua,[47] and his commentary reveals the emerging humanist interests of his time.[48] Yet the term "humanism" is, as always, complex, whether used to refer to late medieval/early Renaissance developments on the Continent or in England.[49] In this

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[44] Weiss, *Humanism in England,* 3.

[45] I am grateful to the Research Group on Medieval and Early Modern Women at the University of North Carolina and Duke University, for their comments on this section.

[46] For further discussion of Regius' edition, see Moss, *Ovid in Renaissance France,* 28–31; also Moss, *Latin Commentaries on Ovid from the Renaissance,* 32–33.

[47] Don Cameron Allen, *Mysteriously Meant,* 174; Moss, *Ovid in Renaissance France,* 28. Regius taught rhetoric at Padua between 1482–86, then lost his chair of rhetoric to his rival Calphurnius (*Nouvelle Biographie Générale,* ed. M. Hoefer (Copenhagen, 1963). Regius appears to have regained the position again from Marino Becichemo in 1503 through at least 1508. Charles Nauert, Jr., "Humanists, Scientists, and Pliny: Changing Approaches to a Classical Author," *The American Historical Review* 84 (1979), 78 n. 23. He later taught eloquence in Venice until his death (1520).

[48] For the purposes of this discussion, I will be citing the 1497 edition of Regius, printed in Venice by Simon Bevilaqua (British Library, IB 23971), a later printing of the first edition (the "legal"edition) Bevilaqua printed in 1493.

[49] On the subject of medieval and Renaissance humanism, see Tony Davies, *Humanism* (Routledge, 1997); *Renaissance Humanism: Foundations, Forms, and Legacy,* ed. Albert Rabil, Jr. (Philadelphia, 1988); also *Itinerarium Italicum: The Profile of the Italian*

study, I am employing the word "humanism" as used by Anthony Grafton and Lisa Jardine in their study, *From Humanism to the Humanities*. There they treat humanism in the context of cultural and political attitudes just emerging in the early modern period:

> The new system [humanism] . . . fitted the needs of the new Europe that was taking shape, with its closed governing élites, hereditary offices and strenuous efforts to close off debate on vital political and social questions. It stamped the more prominent members of the new élite with an indelible cultural seal of superiority, it equipped lesser members with fluency and the learned habit of attention to textual detail and it offered everyone a model of true culture as something given, absolute, to be mastered, not questioned—and thus fostered in all its initiates a properly docile attitude towards authority. The education of the humanists was made to order for the Europe of the Counter-Reformation and of late Protestant orthodoxy. . . . In the Renaissance as in other periods . . . the price of collaboration in the renewal of art and literature was collaboration in the constriction of society and polity. The suggestion that it suited the ruling élites of fifteenth- and sixteenth-century Europe to support the new humanism as an educational movement is, we believe, an important one for modern professors of the humanities.[50]

Regius' edition is very much a reflection of its times; an edition with commentary on a popular classical author, it was widely used as a school text. Furthermore, through its commentary we can see Regius' central pedagogical interest: the art of rhetoric, which as scholars have shown was as much a political, as literary, art in early modern Italy. Regius taught eloquence in both Padua and Venice; his students at those universities followed a curriculum which was intended to equip them to be servants of the state.

In both form and treatment of Ovid's poem, Regius' work is most like the "Vulgate," offering both a Latin text of the poem and a commentary which displays interest in matters of narrative and characters' inner states. But in assessing Regius' attempt at a scholarly Latin edition of the *Metamorphoses*, Moss characterizes his emendation procedures as "sporadic, unsophisticated and unsystematic."[51] There are other indications that humanist endeavors on the Continent

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Renaissance in the Mirror of its European Transformations, eds. Heiko A. Oberman and Thomas Brady, Jr. (Leiden, 1975).

[50] Grafton and Jardine, *From Humanism to the Humanities*, xiii–xiv.

[51] Moss, *Ovid in Renaissance France*, 29.

were slower than one might expect: the first French translations of the *Metamorphoses* to attempt to render the classical Latin text faithfully were printed only in 1534. Even so, in the 1550's the trend among French translations of the work was to include extensive moralizations of the fables in the introductory part of the poem. And while the first sixteenth-century Latin edition printed without the traditional marginal commentary appeared in 1530, it was still based on a medieval moralized version of the *Metamorphoses*.[52] Despite the somewhat sluggish development of humanism even on the Continent, however, Regius' *Enarrationes* does manifest the beginnings of humanist interest in narrative, rhetoric, and characterization as ends in themselves. Regius' work also displays interest in the heroine's interior monologue; in fact in many passages Regius appears to be drawing on the "Vulgate" commentary. Regius' edition of the *Metamorphoses* was the most widely used in the sixteenth century, and Jacob Pontanus in 1618 praises Regius' edition as a source for his own edition of the *Metamorphoses* (fol. a2v).

Evidence is plentiful that Regius' edition was widely used, not just on the Continent but also in England. Although the first two printed editions of Regius were pirated editions by Bartholomaeus Merula in 1492 and 1493, later in 1493 Regius, after having sued Merula, published the first "legal" edition with the publisher Bernardinus Benalius.[53] In 1496 at Caen, Petrus Reginaldus initiated the first French publication of Regius' edition for the university curriculum: according to Moss, Reginaldus' intent was "helping to supply his own students' need for texts of ancient poets which are free from error."[54] By 1500, the legal edition had been printed eleven times; after 1500, as Grundy Steiner states,

> its popularity was such that none of its older competitors among the source-texts seems to have been reprinted. That it was printed in Venice from the start, one of the great centers of the book trade, undoubtedly helped its spread, but the fact that it was the first edition with commentary (and with a commentary that met the needs of its time) might have guaranteed popularity regardless of where it was printed. It was published also in Paris and Lyons before 1500 and had

[52] Ibid., 37–38.

[53] Grundy Steiner, "Source-Editions of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* (1471–1500)" *Transactions of the American Philological Association* 82 (1951), 229–31.

[54] Moss, *Ovid in Renaissance France*, 28.

been published close to sixty times in France and Italy by the end of the next century.[55]

After Regius' death in 1520, his edition was reprinted not only in France and Italy, but also Switzerland, and later Belgium (Pontanus' 1618 Antwerp edition, also intended for classroom use). In 1543 Jacob Micyllus edited and reprinted Regius' *Metamorphoses* at Basel, Switzerland.[56] Erasmus himself, in a letter, recounts seeing "no famous men . . . except Raffaele Regio" in Padua when the latter was about seventy years old, attending a Greek lecture by Marcus Musurus.[57] According to Davis Harding, excerpts from the Regius commentary continue to surface "in the popular editions of Bersman, the Heins' brothers, Farnaby, and Cnipping—or, in other words, until well beyond the middle of the seventeenth century." Harding and others have shown that the edition was popular in England: Arthur Golding used Regius' edition and commentary for his English translation of Ovid's poem in 1567. In 1622, English schoolmaster John Brinsley, in his *A Consolation for our Grammar Schooles*, specifically encourages the use of Regius' Ovid as a school text.[58]

In considering Regius' readings of Ovid, it is important to situate his edition (and thus his particular hermeneutic) with regard to several different, but intersecting, factors in Italy at this period: the early modern use of classical schooltexts; humanist perspectives on the feminine; and finally, the problematics of gender in early modern rhetoric. Recently Grafton and Jardine have shown that Renaissance editions of classical authors, particularly those used as classtexts or lecture-aids, do not inculcate moral virtue at every step in the body of the commentary, as promised in the often glowing prefatory material.[59] The aims of humanistic education, as often inscribed in such prefaces, were to train young men's minds through the moral wisdom

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[55] Steiner, "Source-Editions," 231.

[56] Allen, *Mysteriously Meant*, 178. Micyllus also went under the last name of Moltzer.

[57] Quoted by Jacob Pontanus in his 1618 edition, *Metamorphoseon* (Lyons, 1618; facsimile edition, New York, 1976), fol. a2v; *The Correspondence of Erasmus (Letters 1522 23)*, trans. R. A. B. Mynors (Toronto, 1989), 420.

[58] John Brinsley, *A Consolation for our Grammar Schooles* (1622), facsimile ed. T. C. Pollock (New York, 1943), 66; Davis Harding, *Milton and the Renaissance Ovid* (Urbana, 1946), 19 n. 21; 20 n. 24. For Golding's use of Regius, see Grundy Steiner, "Golding's Use of the Regius-Micyllus Commentary upon Ovid," *Journal of English and Germanic Philology* 49 (1950), 317–23.

[59] Grafton and Jardine, *From Humanism to the Humanities*, 24.

of the ancients, to the end that students be equipped to be fit servants of the state. Yet much like the hermeneutic gap between the *accessus* and commentary of the medieval classical schooltext, Grafton and Jardine demonstrate that often the body of the Renaissance commentary is preoccupied with, even overwhelmed with, quite other matters. These classical schooltexts are a reflection of actual teaching methods themselves: Guarino Guarini and other humanist schoolmasters produced students who were admirably fluent in classical Latin, but only with rigorous, intensive training in the fine points of Latin language and grammar.[60] As Grafton and Jardine observe, "The very nature of the meticulous, readily retainable, ready-to-recall instruction [Guarino] devised precluded any kind of rich overview. To embark on generalised discussion of the intrinsic value of a classical education for character formation, or as a grooming for a public servant, would have been to distract the pupil from the task in hand."[61] Moss confirms this phenomenon in the case of Regius, whose editions of the *Metamorphoses* began to be published a half century later: "It is virtually only in his preface that Regius directs his reader to the moral significance of Ovid's tales. In the body of his commentary he sets them as clearly as he can in the context of their own historical period, explaining anything foreign to the reader of his day by reference to the Latin or Greek authorities—usually none more recent than the late antique period."[62] In Regius' preface he discusses the ways in which the *Metamorphoses* is ideal for use as a school-text.[63] As Moss observes, "the form and the content of the commentary are quite specifically geared to the needs of contemporary school-teaching, and it doubtless reflects very faithfully what was being taught about Ovid and about ancient poetry in general."[64]

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[60] Guarino himself taught beginning through university-level students. His pupils ranged widely in age; one, Leonello d'Este, began his studies at the age of twenty-two and finished them six years later (Ibid., 9). From L. Carbone's funeral oration for Guarino we learn that "many men" from all parts of Italy, from Germany, Dalmatia, and England came to learn Latin at Guarino's school. His school was established in Ferrara in 1429 and by 1442, already "the arts faculty of the new university of Ferrara," the university was undergoing reform (Ibid., 1). On Guarino, see also Paul Grendler, *Schooling in Renaissance Italy: Literacy and Learning 1300–1600* (Baltimore, 1989), 126–29.

[61] Grafton and Jardine, *From Humanism to the Humanities*, 22.

[62] Moss, *Latin Commentaries on Ovid from the Renaissance*, 30.

[63] Regius, *Enarrationes*, fol. a ii v.

[64] Moss, *Ovid in Renaissance France*, 29.

Before analyzing Regius' treatment of Ovid's heroines, it seems useful to consider the recent work of Debora Shuger, *Habits of Thought in the English Renaissance*. Although Shuger's terrain is the religious, literary, and philosophical authors of early modern England, she is one of the few scholars who has worked to uncover some of the heterogeneity of early modern readings of gender. I draw her into this discussion not for the specific light her findings may shed on Regius in late fifteenth-century Venice, but for the light they shed on the complex of ways in which the feminine was being constructed by scholars and poets in early modern England and western Europe; like Zeitlin, whose analysis of gender in classical Greek drama applies to an even more distant culture and period, Shuger is dissatisfied with facile constructions of "patriarchy" applied to the literature and thought of the English Renaissance which present an oversimplified and thus, historically distorted, view of the period.[65] Shuger concedes that the "gender distinctions" of the Renaissance are that "women are weaker, more sensual than men, and therefore less suitable to govern"; yet she complicates current concepts of Renaissance patriarchy by showing that such authors as Richard Hooker, William Tyndale, Lancelot Andrewes, and even John Calvin represent God the Father in the imagery of nurture and gentleness.[66] Hooker's analogy for the parental love and mercy of God the Father will stand as a representative example: "Where should the frighted child hide his head, but in the bosom of his loving father?"[67] As Shuger points out, these examples "seem to assume that fathers are and should be tender, nurturing, affectionate, and emotional—qualities that recent scholarship, including some feminist scholarship, classifies as female." She also speculates whether "current notions of gender differentiation may postdate the Renaissance."[68] Shuger's discussion exposes the instability in English Renaissance notions of, and associations with, gender categories. From what we have seen of many Ovid commentaries, written in England and on the Continent, it appears that

[65] This is not to imply that there is *any* historically accurate view of any period in the past, but rather that more complicated representations of any social phenomenon in the past are likely to be more accurate.

[66] Shuger, *Habits of Thought in the English Renaissance*, 223, 220–222.

[67] Richard Hooker, *The Works of that Learned and Judicious Divine, Mr. Richard Hooker*, ed. Rev. John Keble; rev. R. W. Church and F. Paget, 7th ed. (Oxford, 1888; reprint New York, 1970) 3.652; quoted in Shuger, *Habits of Thought*, 222.

[68] Shuger, *Habits of Thought*, 223, 222–23.

such categories were not fixed in the Middle Ages either, though commentators may have subscribed at times to certain traditional "habits of thought" in this regard.

Much has been said and written in the last two decades to establish Renaissance humanists' ways of understanding, and writing about, women.[69] Obvious disparities existed not only in the education of men and women in this period, but in every other aspect of life. The now-famous rhetorical question, "Did women have a Renaissance?,"[70] has become a means of illustrating the ways in which Renaissance humanist culture and its "rewards" were something available to a male élite only. Scholars have documented a number of highly educated women in Renaissance Italy, who wrote poetry, did translations, and corresponded with other humanists of the day.[71] Unfortunately, as has been frequently shown, such women often found that extensive education was a liability, for they, unlike their male counterparts, could find neither employment nor acceptability in society as a result of it.[72] What is often analyzed in considering Renaissance perspectives on women are treatises which overtly take up the "woman question," pro or con; poetry and other literature from the period; educational treatises; letters; and other written documents. Less frequently assessed for humanist readings of gender are actual school texts, that is, non-theoretical educational materials which do not explicitly address women and schooling, for example, but which nevertheless offer readings of the feminine in, for example, characterization. What Renaissance authors had to say about women

[69] The bibliography now is extensive; I offer only a brief sample here. Ian MacLean, *The Renaissance Notion of Woman: a Study in the Fortunes of Scholasticism and Medical Science in European Intellectual Life* (Cambridge, 1980); Grafton and Jardine, *From Humanism to the Humanities*, chapter 2, "Women Humanists"; Erika Rummel, ed., *Erasmus on Women* (Toronto, 1996); Margaret W. Ferguson, Maureen Quilligan, and Nancy J. Vickers, eds., *Rewriting the Renaissance: the Discourses of Sexual Difference in Early Modern Europe* (Chicago, 1986).

[70] Joan Kelly, "Did Women Have a Renaissance?" in *Becoming Visible: Women in European History*, eds. Bridenthal, Koonz, and Stuard, 174–201.

[71] See Margaret L. King and Albert Rabil, Jr., eds., *Her Immaculate Hand: Selected Works By and About the Women Humanists of Quattrocento Italy* (Binghamton, 1983); Constance Jordan, *Renaissance Feminism: Literary Texts and Political Models* (Ithaca, 1990); Patricia H. Lahalme, ed., *Beyond Their Sex: Learned Women of the European Past* (New York, 1980).

[72] With regard to Renaissance Italy see, for example, in Labalme, *Beyond Their Sex*, the essays by Margaret L. King, "Book-Lined Cells: Women and Humanism in the Early Italian Renaissance" and Paul Oskar Kristeller, "Learned Women of Early Modern Italy: Humanists and University Scholars."

in theoretical treatises has been well demonstrated,[73] but what did they say in practice? How did they actually read gender when interpreting a major work of classical poetry, such as the *Metamorphoses*, what Wayne Rebhorn has called "arguably the most widely read Latin classic in the Renaissance"?[74] Regius' edition offers us one such illustration. In my assessment of his edition which follows, I do not wish to claim that his edition was in any sense representative of all or many humanist commentators' readings of the feminine; however, his work is significant in the sense that it was not only very popular, but even widely recommended for use in the schools.

In their readings of the feminine, both Regius and Jacob Pontanus at times participate in polarizing "habits of thought" regarding the feminine. Tony Davies discusses the "gender trouble" afflicting many Renaissance humanists, who seem to view the feminine only in this polarity: "Misogyny and philogyny, hatred and idealisation of women, are equally and inseparably elements of the male discourse of eloquence, men speaking of and for women."[75] While I would agree with Davies to an extent, the discourse of humanists as it pertains to the feminine cannot be reduced to only these two alternatives. Furthermore, in my discussion, the term "habits of thought" does not necessarily mean that male authors and editors only unconsciously mediate such negative views, or that they are somehow not responsible for an inherited, but negative, hermeneutic regarding the feminine. Rather, humanist writing reveals the conflict at work in the perceptions a humanist commentator brings to the feminine. This conflict, furthermore, is not between the poles of praise and blame, but a more complex one: a conflict between received (negative or praise/blame) hermeneutics and other (not necessarily new) ways of regarding the feminine, which are non-moralizing in nature. Also, Regius' perceptions of the feminine do not necessarily reveal his actual views of real women; in this context Bynum's comments regarding medieval Cistercian clerics writing about the feminine are again helpful: "Thus the attitudes of a man toward the feminine (as distinct from women) may reflect not so much his attitudes toward his

[73] For examples, see Jordan, *Renaissance Feminism*, chapter 1; Ian MacLean, *The Renaissance Notion of Woman*, chapters 2-4.

[74] Wayne Rebhorn, *The Emperor of Men's Minds: Literature and the Renaissance Discourse of Rhetoric* (Ithaca, 1996), 171.

[75] Davies, *Humanism*, 88.

mother, his sister, females in his community, what attracts him sexually, and so forth, as his sense of the feminine aspects of himself."[76]

The Veneto offered comparatively fertile ground for changing perspectives on women. Although he was not born there, Regius appears to have spent all of his life teaching in the Veneto, either at Padua or at Venice. Regius in 1493 dedicated his commentary on the *Metamorphoses* to Francesco Gonzaga, the marquis of Mantua and patron of the classics, whose wife, Isabelle d'Este, was also famous for her interests in antiquity; [77] furthermore, from early in the fifteenth century, the Gonzaga family for several generations educated their daughters extensively.[78] Whether Regius actually knew the marquis is difficult to ascertain, as dedications to "members of the ruling families of the Italian states, to the patrician households . . . or to leading figures in the hierarchy of the Church" were commonly used as a type of editorial preemptive strike against later criticism.[79] Craig Kallendorf has observed that there was in the Renaissance "a striking concentration of learned women who followed a [humanistic] programme of studies . . . in and around the Veneto."[80] He further argues that "a striking preponderance of treatises examined by Constance Jordan as representative of Renaissance feminism were published in Venice."[81] As for Padua, in 1487 Cassandra Fedele recited an "oration on the liberal arts" at the University of Padua, "winning [her] great fame."[82] Also in Padua, Angelo Beolco wrote his *Pastoral* in 1517, a play which protests against the treatment of peasants; in it he imagines a utopia in which, in addition to other social improvements, marriage laws are reformed so as to provide equally for women. According to Linda Carroll, other reformers from the period "preached equality" but

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[76] Bynum, *Jesus as Mother*, 167.

[77] For Isabella d'Este, see Werner Gundersheimer, "Women, Learning, and Power: Eleonora of Aragon and the Court of Ferrara," in LaBalme, *Beyond Their Sex*, 56–57; Clifford M. Brown and Anna Maria Lorenzoni, "'Concludo che non vidi mai la piu bella casa in Italia': The Frescoed Decorations in Francesco II Gonzaga's Suburban Villa in the Mantuan Countryside at Gonzaga (1491–1496)" *Renaissance Quarterly* 49 (1996), 268–302.

[78] King, *Her Immaculate Hand*, 19–20.

[79] Brian Richardson, *Printing, Writers and Readers in Renaissance Italy* (Cambridge, 1999), 51.

[80] Craig Kallendorf, *Virgil and the Myth of Venice: Books and Readers in the Italian Renaissance* (Oxford, 1999), 191–92; see also King, "Book-Lined Cells," 67.

[81] Kallendorf, *Virgil and the Myth of Venice*, 193.

[82] King, "Book-Lined Cells," 69.

> they practiced not polygamy, but polygyny, one of the most extreme forms of female subjugation. Reformers also marginalized women's position in other ways. More's plan, for example, involves a strongly patriarchal family structure that oppresses both wives and children; Beolco, on the contrary, continues the anti-patriarchal theme of the *Pastoral* in adapting these and other reforming sources.[83]

Again, these factors are not mentioned to imply any even proto-feminism on Regius' part, but rather to show that he lived, taught, and wrote in a climate which was somewhat more progressive in its time than other parts of Italy. Kallendorf acknowledges the somewhat greater latitude found in perspectives on women in Venice, and illustrates this latitude through sixteenth-century Gaspara Stampa's poetry. As just one example, Stampa adapts a speech of Aeneas, through which Virgil had presented him as a model of "heroic resolution"; Stampa recasts the speech in a first-person female narrator's voice, thereby challenging many of the assumptions of her male-dominated society. Yet Kallendorf concludes that such voices as Stampa's were subversive in early modern Venice and, unfortunately, were finally contained within the larger patriarchal ideology which dominated there.[84]

A final consideration in the analysis of Regius' own readings of the Ovidian heroine has to do with the role and function of rhetoric in the pedagogy of early modern Italy. Rhetoric was the staple of a student's education in fifteenth- and sixteenth-century Venice (not to mention western Europe). At Padua in particular, from the thirteenth century, "future lawyers and notaries pursued rhetorical studies . . . and . . . such studies were considered a necessary part of their professional preparation"; Virgil and Ovid figured regularly in their curriculum. In the latter half of the fourteenth century, even medical students were required to learn rhetoric through classical texts.[85] Humanist pedagogy emphasized the *ars epistolandi* over the medieval *ars dictandi*; as a further means of teaching rhetoric, humanists revived the classical oration, which had been given much less attention in the medieval classroom.[86] In the fifteenth century, rhetoric at Padua

[83] Linda L. Carroll, "A Nontheistic Paradise in Renaissance Padua," *Sixteenth Century Journal* 24 (1993), 884.

[84] Kallendorf, *Virgil and the Myth of Venice*, 198, 210.

[85] Siraisi, *Arts and Sciences at Padua*, 55, 56.

[86] Paul O. Kristeller, "Rhetoric in Medieval and Renaissance Culture" in *Renaissance Eloquence: Studies in the Theory and Practice of Renaissance Rhetoric*, ed. James J. Murphy (Berkeley, 1983), 11.

began to show such humanist leanings: by 1410, "adaptation of [the classical *genus demonstrativum*] to Christian saints was a standard exercise at Padua" as well as the incorporation of such classical oratorical techniques into "doctrinal sermons or sermons dealing with the life of Christ." Gasparino Barzizza, the orator and teacher of rhetoric who had initiated these adaptations,[87] also wrote works on rhetoric which offered "practical examples of *exordia*, in accordance with the prescriptions of the *Ad Herennium* and with instruction on style, the *colores*, elocution, imitation, and the structure of Latin discourse."[88] As Ronald Ohl has shown, the University of Padua's "courses of study were required for appointments to many positions in the government and commercial structure of the Republic . . . the University of Padua provided an opportunity to transfer education from ecclesiastical to political authority and to create an educated class of civil servants and men trained in law and the sciences who could assist in managing Venetian commercial interests and in governing an expanding Republic."[89] Rashdall observes that as a university Padua had gained international renown by the fifteenth century: "it was under Venetian tutelage that Padua reached the zenith of her glory, becoming in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries one of the two or three leading universities in Europe."[90] To study rhetoric at this internationally-renowned university, then, was one step in the path of many young men seeking to embark on careers in law, government, education, or civil service.

Early modern rhetoric, both in theory and in practice, offers us a range of ways to gauge humanist readings of gender, and in particular, the feminine. Female students were forbidden to learn oratory,

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[87] John O' Malley, "Content and Rhetorical Forms in Sixteenth-Century Treatises on Preaching," *Renaissance Eloquence*, ed. Murphy, 239.

[88] John O. Ward, "Commentators on Ciceronian Rhetoric," in *Renaissance Eloquence*, ed. Murphy, 166.

[89] Ronald Edward Ohl, "The University of Padua, 1405–1509: an International Community of Students and Scholars," unpublished dissertation (University of Pennsylvania, 1980), 105.

[90] Rashdall, *The Universities of Europe in the Middle Ages*, 2.21; although Regius taught rhetoric at Padua only between 1482-86 and again from 1503 on, his edition of the *Metamorphoses* appears to have been written while at Padua, where he lived until c. 1492. It was in print continuously from 1493 in Italy and France until well after his death (1520), and one can assume that Regius taught from it at Padua after 1503. For further details on Regius, see Charles G. Nauert, Jr., "C. Plinius Secundus (*Naturalis Historia*)," *Catalogus Translationum et Commentariorum: Medieval and Renaissance Latin Translations and Commentaries* (Washington, 1980), 4.337–38.

as Leonardo Bruni states in his 1424 letter to Baptista di Montifeltro, which outlines the ideal curriculum for a woman:

> Indeed there are certain disciplines of which, just as it is not comely to be totally ignorant, so also it is not a source of glory to strive toward their lofty summits, such as geometry and arithmetic, in which if one should proceed to consume much time and to examine all subtleties and obscurities, I would withdraw and part company with it. And that which I would do in the case of astrology, so would I also do in the case of rhetoric. I have spoken concerning this last rather unwillingly, since if anyone living has been moved by it, I confess that I am one of their number. But there is a justification for these things and in the first place it must be seen the sort of person to whom I am writing. For why should the subtleties of essential points and worries of dialectical proofs, and those things which are called *crinomena* [judgments], and the thousand difficulties in this art wear down a woman, who is never destined to see the courtroom? Truthfully now, that skillful speech which the Greeks have called *apokrisis* [an answer, or defence]—and we call "delivery"—to which, as necessary to the orator, Demosthenes has assigned first and second and third [place]: thus these things must never be labored after by a woman, who if speaking will gesture with her arm or if she will raise the cry/applause more powerfully, she seems frenzied and needs to be restrained. Those matters indeed are for men. As with wars, battles, thus also disputes and formal speeches in the courtroom. Therefore a woman will not learn further to speak for witnesses or against witnesses, nor for tortures nor against them, nor for rumors nor against them, nor will she declaim on general themes, nor will she practice two-part interrogations, nor will she rehearse cunning refutations. Finally she will leave the entire harshness of the assembly to men. When therefore will I apply the spurs? When will I goad on the one running? When she will devote herself to those subjects which pertain either to holy piety or to living well, then I shall insist that she give all her energy to it, that she apply her mind, that she persist day and night. It will hardly ever tire her to speak concerning these matters, one at a time. First of all, therefore, let the Christian woman apply herself to acquire an understanding of sacred letters.[91]

For the cultured woman's education Bruni, however, then goes on to recommend history, oratory (only as a model for her own prose), and poetry. An irony of Bruni's treatise is that in 1433, Baptista

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[91] Leonardo Bruni, *De studiis*, ed. Hans Baron (Leipzig, 1928); I have provided my own translation of the Bruni passage. For further discussion of Bruni, see Gordon Griffiths, James Hankins, and David Thompson, trans., *The Humanism of Leonardo Bruni: Selected Texts* (Binghamton, New York: 1987). See also William Harrison Woodward, *Vittorino da Feltre and Other Humanist Educators* (1987; reprint Cambridge,

recited a Latin oration in honor of the Emperor Sigismund as he travelled through Urbino.[92] Yet as Regius' commentary on Ovid's heroines is largely mediated through his analysis of the oratorical and rhetorical aspects of their speeches, it seems useful to consider briefly here the ways in which early modern rhetoric itself represented the feminine. Wayne Rebhorn argues that Renaissance rhetoric, the "emperor of men's minds," constitutes a use of language and discourse inextricable from the structures of power dominating Renaissance Europe. According to Rebhorn, "the myth of the orator-civilizer is . . . ideological in the sense that it is a demystification of the real power relations that obtain in society. If it defines human beings as possessing a defective nature, it does so in order that their wildness will both require and justify their taming at the orator's hands . . . the rhetoricians' myth becomes a story of civilization as coercion and imperialism, about civilization as the colonization not of distant peoples but of the ones with whom the civilizer lives."[93] Renaissance rhetoric has been linked with politics since the early 1960's; Rebhorn's approach to this connection differs in that he sees rhetoric as political "not because of the uses to which it is put or the styles it engenders but because, in the imagination of the period, the relationship between *rhetor* and audience is conceived fairly consistently in political terms as one between ruler and subject."[94] Rebhorn's study is important because it goes further than many earlier studies in historicizing rhetoric as it was applied and used in the Renaissance. The argument Rebhorn makes about rhetoric as a political art/act has important implications, when one considers how deeply invested Renaissance pedagogy was in it as a discipline, and how extensive was the reach of rhetoric, into literature, oratory, sermons, and almost every other form of written and spoken discourse in the period. Rhetoric was vigorously denounced and defended in the Renaissance; indeed Regius himself defends it in his *De Laudibus eloquentiae panegyricus* (1483), invoking the "myth of the orator-civilizer" Rebhorn describes. Regius views rhetoric as the "author of all civilization and the parent of all noble arts" (fols. i v–ii v). It "distinguishes men

1996), 119–33; it should be noted, however, that Woodward's translation, which is often quoted, is a loose paraphrase which omits important material.

[92] Woodward, p. 120.

[93] Rebhorn, *The Emperor of Men's Minds*, 26, 27. The title of Rebhorn's book is taken from Henry Peacham's *Garden of Eloquence* (1593).

[94] Ibid., 9.

from beasts and enables them to come together in civil society; it is the source of religion, marriage, and reverence for parents. Without it there would be no justice, no recognition of children, no charity to one's neighbors, no contemplation of the heavens or love of God."[95] Regius is presenting a fairly conventional defense of the subject. Yet other authors from Padua such as Beolco used rhetoric to transmit anti-authoritarian polemics; he wrote a satirical oration (*Prima Oratione*, 1521) meant to mock one of the orations of Marino Becichemo, the University of Padua's orator.[96]

If early modern rhetoric reflects the colonizing politics dominating western Europe, its figurations of gender are no less inflected. There is no question that in Renaissance Italy, the teaching of rhetoric through Latin was gendered in many ways.[97] As Lee Patterson states, "Neither discursive structures nor subjectivity itself is, we now understand, a socially neutral phenomenon: both are constructed, and constructed in thoroughly gendered ways."[98] Rebhorn shows that rhetoric itself was presented in a range of gendered forms in the Renaissance. Though it is sometimes presented as masculine in the person of Orpheus or Hercules, it is also frequently personified as a "queen or lady" partly because of its connection to creativity and the birth-giving process.[99] Rebhorn notes that the beginnings of orations are often likened to the process of giving birth, that style is frequently described in terms of "bodily adornment and cosmetics," and that rhetorical discourse and the act of persuasion are often figured in aggressive, sexual terms, what Rebhorn reads as rape.[100] Patricia Parker argues that early modern rhetoric is gendered such that it

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[95] Raphael Regius, *De Laudibus eloquentiae panegyricus* (Padua, 1483), British Library IA.30002. I quote Rebhorn's translation (*The Emperor of Men's Minds*, 24).

[96] Carroll, "A Nontheistic Paradise in Renaissance Padua," 882, 881. Beolco would draw on Erasmus' more subversive works in later writings.

[97] See Walter J. Ong, "Latin Language Study as a Renaissance Puberty Rite" *Studies in Philology* 56 (1959), 103–24; Ruth Mazo Karras, "Separating the Men from the Goats: Masculinity, Civilization and Identity Formation in the Medieval University," in *Conflicted Identities and Multiple Masculinities: Men in the Medieval West*, ed. Jacqueline Murray (New York, 1999), 189–213.

[98] Lee Patterson, "Feminine Rhetoric and the Politics of Subjectivity: La Vieille and the Wife of Bath," in *Rethinking the Romance of the Rose: Text, Image, Reception*, eds. Kevin Brownlee and Sylvia Huot (Philadelphia, 1992), 317. While I agree with some of Patterson's arguments in this article, I do not find la Vieille reflecting or achieving authentic agency or subjectivity in the *Roman de la rose*.

[99] Rebhorn, *The Emperor of Men's Minds*, 181, 172.

[100] Ibid., 172, 173, 154, 159–70.

links the masculine with order/control/mastery and feminine with unruliness/disorder/danger.[101] Although both Rebhorn and Parker have certainly illuminated rhetorical readings of gender in the Renaissance and established some important principles about the way gender was represented in early modern rhetorical texts, they at times create a totalizing hermeneutic. However, Rebhorn offers an insight about the representation of gender which may shed light on the hermeneutic Regius himself uses when reading the feminine through rhetoric. According to Rebhorn, "in the patriarchal culture of Renaissance Europe, where rulers were figured as males, subjects, in a complementary move, were equated with women." Yet, or perhaps therefore, a number of rhetoricians from the period represented rhetoric as in some sense androgynous, sharing aspects of both sexes: its "double nature reflects their own doubleness, their sense that they were, or could be, both rulers and subjects, both men and women, in terms of the culture within which they lived."[102] Constance Jordan also discusses the phenomenon of what she calls "symbolic androgyny" in the Renaissance, which had a "positive valence"; it is "a figure representing the spiritual (and intellectual) dimension of human experience."[103] For Rebhorn, Renaissance rhetoricians would have keenly felt their position as subjects partly as a function of the middle level on the social scale in which they found themselves somewhat trapped: "a training in rhetoric and the other liberal arts enabled people from the lower and middling classes to move up the social ladder and, in some cases, even to hobnob with the elite. What that training normally could *not* do, except in the rarest of instances, was to allow them actually to become part of the elite."[104] It seems clear from Rebhorn's characterization here that he is distinguishing another, higher tier within the humanist "elite," in terms of social class, than Grafton and Jardine present; the latter describe the whole class of Renaissance humanists as a male elite. If Rebhorn's argument is true

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[101] Patricia Parker, *Literary Fat Ladies: Rhetoric, Gender, Property* (London, 1987), 97–103.

[102] Rebhorn, *The Emperor of Men's Minds*, 195. Rebhorn cites Joan de Guzman, J. Du Pré de la Porte, Marsilio Ficino, and Giovanni Pico della Mirandola as authors who deployed such figures (189–90); he also discusses Erasmus' figure of Folly as reflecting attributes of both sexes (183–85).

[103] Jordan, *Renaissance Feminism*, 136.

[104] Rebhorn, *The Emperor of Men's Minds*, 195.

(and he limits his argument to rhetoricians only), it provides an explanation of why rhetoricians could see themselves not only as rulers but, somewhat more anxiously, as subjects. Rebhorn speaks of the "ambiguity" of their position, never completely (in social rank, at least) attaining the measure of "complete human beings, worthy to rule as emperors of men's minds."[105] When rhetoric is personified in the Renaissance, it shows some of this ambiguity through the complex of ways in which it is gendered; this ambiguous figuration further reflects some of the instability (or flexibility) of early modern gender categories which Shuger also illustrates. Beyond its more traditional, polarized figurations (negative: Circe; positive: mother giving birth, for example), rhetoric as feminine may also prove "good for thinking with."

Regius reflects some of this flexibility with regard to readings of gender, and the feminine in particular, when commenting upon the many speeches of Ovid's heroines in the *Metamorphoses*. Regius finds Ovid's poem an ideal vehicle for illustrating many Renaissance ideals regarding rhetoric. The *Metamorphoses* was a good choice, for its heroines' monologues were modeled by Ovid after the speeches of Euripides' heroines. In antiquity, Ovid's now-lost tragedy, *Medea*, was very popular; furthermore, Romans viewed tragedy as "the verse equivalent of declamation. . . . [Ovid] was an accomplished declaimer, whose surviving poetry bears ample evidence of his accomplishments in that form."[106] While Regius himself was probably not aware of Ovid's renown in declamation, the Renaissance commentator's choice of the *Metamorphoses* shows his discovery of the extensive use of rhetoric Ovid incorporates into his heroines' speeches. Paul Grendler has shown that schoolmasters teaching rhetoric in Renaissance Italy were aware that most of their students would not go on to become princes or orators but would instead be employed as "secretaries, diplomats, civil servants." These teachers therefore focused more on "secondary rhetoric" through the form of letter-writing than on "primary rhetoric," emphasizing classical orations.[107] For whatever larger ends Regius' popular schooltext of the *Metamorphoses* was used, its immediate pur-

[105] Ibid.

[106] Sander M. Goldberg, "Melpomene's Declamation (Rhetoric and Tragedy)," in *Roman Eloquence: Rhetoric in Society and Literature*, ed. William J. Dominik (London, 1997), 170.

[107] Grendler, *Schooling in Renaissance Italy*, 209.

pose pedagogically seems to have been to teach the power of eloquence or rhetoric to persuade. And because the great majority of Ovid's barristers are female in the *Metamorphoses*, the central focus, for Regius' pedagogical purposes, is frequently the speeches of female characters.

Throughout his commentary, Regius employs the word *eleganter*, often employed by Cicero, to praise Ovid's skillful word choice and poetic style on a variety of subjects, including Ovid's portrayal of heroines' psychological quandaries. The word *eleganter*, which derives from the verb *eligere*, to choose, can have a variety of significations, such as "with correct choice, tastefully . . . gracefully, elegantly."[108] David Marsh notes that Cicero defined the word *elegantia* as that which "effects the pure and clear expression of every single topic, and comprises Latinity and clarity." Lorenzo Valla (d. 1457) in his *Elegantiae* provides a helpful perspective on the usage of this word by Italian classicists in Regius' era. Marsh further observes that Valla most often adopts the usage found in jurists who call a "nice legal discrimination . . . an 'elegans distinctio'" but that "Vallian 'elegance' occupies a sort of middle ground between grammar and eloquence."[109] Regius' usage of *eleganter* seems also to evoke Valla's range of meanings, from "precisely" to "elegantly." For Regius, Ovid's portraits of heroines' inner quandaries often earn this approving comment; and its regular appearance in his commentary confirms Regius' approach to Ovid's poem as a vehicle for teaching the art of rhetoric and persuasive language. For Regius, the relation between rhetoric and gender is paradoxical, however. Where the disgruntled fifteenth-century author of the *Ovide moralisé* can protest over the shifting thoughts of the Ovidian heroine, Regius repeatedly finds her speeches and situations an ideal locus for the illustration of persuasive speech and language. Thus, Regius' male students are taught to ape (in writing and speech) the extended discourse of the Ovidian heroine, a reverse form of ventriloquism and mimicry. Here, in fact, the feminine is not only good to think with, it is also good to "speak with." The irony here is that Regius instructs his male students, the soon-to-be courtiers and legislators of patriarchal Venice, in a rhetorical art for

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108 *Oxford Latin Dictionary*, s.v. "eleganter." Neither Du Cange nor Niermeyer lists this word.

109 Marsh's translation of *Ad Herennium* IV.12.17. David Marsh, "Grammar, Method, and Polemic in Lorenzo Valla's *Elegantiae*," *Rinascimento* 19 (1979), 100, 101.

which he draws on Ovid's heroines as models. I do not wish to argue that Regius was conscious of these ironies; indeed it may well have been only the accident of Ovid's own preferences in emphasizing the heroine's quandaries, that resulted in Regius' subsequent pedagogical attentions. But humanist educators in Renaissance Venice, while conforming to the structures of power which legitimized a male élite, at times (even quite unconsciously) employed the feminine to equip their students for careers in the all-male professions of law and government. In fact, Regius is a good example of the way one commentator could both subscribe to the "myth of the orator-civilizer" and thus participate in one form of his society's structures of control and domination, but nevertheless find Ovid's heroines and their deliberations worthy as rhetorical models for his students, and thus escape another (the prevalent linking of the feminine with inferior forms of intellect). For this Italian professor of rhetoric (whose editions were widely used in the sixteenth century), there appear to have been two texts of central interest: Ovid's *Metamorphoses* and Quintilian's *Institutio Oratoria*.[110]

Regius' *Enarrationes* offers detailed commentary on the inner quandaries of Ovidian heroines, at times incorporating readings from the "Vulgate," but also providing new comments. While generally avoiding passing any moral judgment on Ovid's heroines, Regius does at times pause to praise Ovid himself for his expertise in characterization. This praise which he offers, furthermore, does not necessarily function as covert instantiation of patriarchal misogyny. Regius' approbatory comments on Ovid spring from Regius' response to Ovid's use of rhetoric (Regius himself had edited Quintilian as well). Students (presumably male) learning about the Ovidian heroine from Regius' lectures (whether given by Regius himself or by other humanists teaching from the text) would not have been taught to read these heroines, with their highly rhetorical speeches, as examples of feminine excess. In fact, if for Regius "the moral effect of language lies

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[110] Many of Regius' extant editions are of the *Metamorphoses* and the *Institutio Oratoria*. Ward states that, of the approximately forty editions of the *Institutes* printed between 1482 and 1599, "Regius' commentary on the whole of the *Institutes* saw at least fourteen editions"; in "Commentators on Ciceronian Rhetoric," *Renaissance Eloquence*, ed. Murphy, 159. Regius also edited the works of other classical authors, including Valerius Maximus, *Facta et dicta memorabilia*; Cicero, *De Officiis*; Homer, *Odyssey*; Horace, *Opera*; Pliny the Elder, *Naturalis Historia*; Pliny the Younger, *Panegyricus*, *Epistolae*.

in the power of rhetoric to persuade,"[111] it is precisely in the Ovidian heroine's speeches that Regius as rhetorician will find (and does find) examples of persuasive rhetoric. Occasionally Regius does pass on a negative comment about women,[112] but this is relatively infrequent, and when Ovid gives him a chance to do so (*Metamorphoses* 10.244–45, Pygmalion's rejection of the "evil nature" of womankind), Regius withholds comment. Again, Regius was clearly not a proto-feminist in any sense, nor do his comments necessarily reflect his actual views on real women.

As book 7 of the *Metamorphoses* opens, for example, Medea is debating over whether to help Jason, the enemy of her father, by using her repertoire of magical skills to enable him to retrieve the golden fleece, yoke the fire-breathing oxen, and sow the field with dragons' teeth. Of Medea's mixed feelings, Ovid notes that "luctata diu," "she struggled for a long time" (10). Regius notes here, "Eleganter autem virginis amore captae cogitationes exponit" (Precisely indeed he expresses the thoughts of the girl in the thrall of love; fol. i. iii v). In his choice of the word *cogitationes*, Regius legitimizes the heroine's struggle by situating it in the intellect. Quintilian discusses *cogitatio* as the essential ground of premeditation and planning, the thinking through and plotting out, of one's thoughts and argument before entering the courtroom. He allows some room for improvisation, but also insists upon the earlier stage of reflection and preparation for the orator's maximum effectiveness:

> Neque vero rerum ordinem modo, quod ipsum satis erat, intra se ipsa disponit, sed verba etiam copulat totamque ita contexit orationem, ut ei nihil praeter manum desit. (*Institutio Oratoria* 10.6.2)[113]

> Again, [*cogitatio*] will not merely secure the proper arrangement of our matter without any recourse to writing, which in itself is not small

[111] Moss, *Latin Commentaries on Ovid from the Renaissance*, 31.

[112] At *Metamorphoses* 10.410, the description of Myrrha as *furibunda* in her discussion with the nurse, Regius comments: "*Furibunda.* furenti similis. virginis autem amantis decorum pulcre servat poeta. Solent enim quo vehementius quod appetunt virgines amore captae: eo magis dissimulare" (*Frenzied.* Like to one maddened. Indeed the poet expresses beautifully the fitting behavior of the girl in love. For girls, overcome with love, the more vehemently they desire it, the more they conceal it, dissemble; fol. ii. viii v). No source for Regius' comment can be found in either manuscript of the "Vulgate" commentary.

[113] Quintilian, *Institutio Oratoria*, trans. H. E. Butler (Cambridge, 1966); I draw on Butler's translation when quoting from the *Institutes* in this chapter.

achievement, but will also set the words which we are going to use in their proper order, and bring the general texture of our speech to such a stage of completion that nothing further is required beyond the finishing touches . . .

In his study of hermeneutics in Renaissance legal texts, Ian MacLean discusses the term *cogitatio* as another word for the "*vox conceptus* . . . or universal language of the mind,"[114] the intermediate phase in the tripartite operation of the intellect described in St. Augustine and St. Anselm.[115] According to MacLean, "In this tripartite scheme, three languages are distinguished: the language of the heart or of faith [*verbum cordis*], which cannot lie and cannot be ambiguous; the language of intellectual life [*vox conceptus* or *cogitatio*] which can be deceptive, but which is unambiguous; and the fallible, fallen language of human communication [*vox articulata*] which can be both deceptive and ambiguous." In high Renaissance Italy there was some debate over the nature and operations of human intellection, with authors such as Girolamo Fracastoro (1483–1553) and Julius Caesar Scaliger weighing in; treatises on the subject included such questions as "How does the will relate to the intellect? Is the intellect eternal? where is it? Does it contain anything which was not previously channelled through the senses?"[116] MacLean observes that such questions were out of the domain of jurisprudence proper, and so were more frequently pursued in the fields of theology and medicine; but even in law it was a given that "thought precedes speech."[117] But equally, as MacLean has elsewhere demonstrated, "in Renaissance legal tracts, the same underlying association of . . . mental weakness in the female sex can be detected as is in evidence in theology, medicine, and ethics."[118] Here exists the obvious disparity between the pejorative discourse on the feminine in the Renaissance, and the ways that Ovid's heroines offer models for intellection, including *cogitatio*, from

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[114] Ian MacLean, *Interpretation and Meaning in the Renaissance: the Case of Law* (Cambridge, 1992), 162.

[115] For further discussion of Augustine's and Anselm's models of cognition and their significations in the Middle Ages, cf. Carruthers, *The Book of Memory*, 199–200. Carruthers situates the process of *cogitatio*, in Quintilian and medieval usage, within an emotion-based behavior of "mulling over" (201); however, MacLean, in his readings of Renaissance usage, locates the process more squarely within the intellect (162).

[116] Ibid., 163.

[117] Ibid., 163–64.

[118] MacLean, *The Renaissance Notion of Woman* (Cambridge, 1980), 72.

the standpoint of the early modern teacher of rhetoric. It should be remembered in this context that Regius was not the solitary teacher of rhetoric taking this approach to the Ovidian heroine and her discourse; his edition rapidly became a widely-used school text in the sixteenth century, and its teeming margins served as lecture notes for many others teaching the discipline.

In her monologue Medea further agonizes for Jason, who will face almost certain death in performing her father's orders; she reflects on his youth, his lineage, his physical attractiveness. At one point Medea rebukes herself, saying, "excute virgineo conceptas pectore flammas," "shake off from your girl's heart conceived passions" (17). Here Regius observes Medea's self-address, passing on his version of the comment in the "Vulgate": "ad se ipsam loquitur dicens" (she addresses herself saying; fol. i. iii v; cf. Sélestat, MS 92, fol. 58v; Austin MS 34, fol. 53v). Medea is also fully aware of the dangers facing her if she follows her heart by aiding Jason: "prodamne ego regna parentis?" (shall I betray my father's throne?; 7.38). Again, echoing the "Vulgate" in its assessment of Medea, Regius analyzes her divided feelings: "*prodamne.* distrahitur Medeae animus tum ab amore. tum ab honesto ut cui pareat ignoret" (*will I betray?* Medea's mind is drawn in different directions, now by love and now by beauty so that she ignores him whom she should obey; fol. i. iii v). Regius seems to draw from the "Vulgate" here in its comment: "*prodamne.* revocat animum suum ab amore" (she summons her soul back from love; Sélestat MS 92, fol. 58v) but amplifies its reading to reflect Medea's vacillating thoughts. Clearly for Regius, Medea's desire transgresses proper filial piety (*ut cui pareat ignoret*); but lest we assume Regius is voicing a proper patrician attitude here, we can see that Ovid's phrase (*prodamne?*) explains the gloss. In some cases, such as this, Regius rearticulates the point of view implied in Ovid's phrasing. Later in the monologue, after concluding that she will be seen as the "servatrix" (savior) of Jason in Greece, she abruptly stops and considers the other point of view: "Ergo ego germanam fratremque patremque deosque/et natale solum ventis ablata relinquam?" (Therefore will I abandon my sister and brother and father and gods and my native soil, carried away by winds? 7.51–52). Regius captures her momentary doubt, even anger, by glossing "Ergo" as the beginning of a clause illustrating the use of *indignatio* and *affectus*, powerful feelings employed in oratory: "*Ergo.* affectui servit hoc loco & indignationi haec particula ergo. Indignatur namque Medea quod

sororem fratrem patrem ac patriam relinquere possit" (*Therefore*. This clause in this place aims at feeling and indignation; *therefore*. For Medea is angry that she could leave behind sister, brother, father and fatherland; fol. i. iiii r; Plate 4). In classical oratory, *indignatio* serves as the second part of an oration's three-part conclusion: these three parts are, in order, the *peroratio*, or "summing up, the *indignatio* or exciting of indignation or ill will against the opponent, and the *conquestio* or arousing of pity and sympathy."[119] At this stage, Medea's speech does appear to be drawing to its close; however, Ovid's innovation, as with most of his heroines, is that at times the speaker herself is the opponent; the prosecutor arraigns herself, as it were. In any case, Regius uses the line to demonstrate how a speaker might inflect his words so as to evoke the maximal emotional effect in the audience. Rather than Medea's vexed deliberations giving rise to a comment on the shifting nature of women, her abrupt change of mood is taken by Regius to illustrate further how the orator may persuade his audience.[120] For *reliquam* (will I abandon?; 7.52) Regius offers the comment, "Est autem cum interrrogatione [*sic*] legendum" (moreover this must be read with questioning; fol. i. iiii r), reading her statement not only from an oratorical perspective (*interrogatio*),[121] but also indicating his awareness of Medea's ambivalence despite her apparent confidence.

Yet again Medea takes courage, and says of her hoped-for departure from Colchis as Jason's bride, "non magna relinquam,/magna sequar" (I will not leave behind great things; I will follow them"; 7.55–56). She then goes on to describe what lies ahead for her: "titulum servatae pubis Achivae" (the title of savior of the Greek youth; 7.56). Here Regius observes that Medea begins an *enumeratio*, another courtroom device: "enumerat autem Medea quibus potitura est: si Jasonem fuerit secuta: quae quidem ipsi maiora videntur quam quae

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[119] Cicero, *De Inventione, De optimo genere oratorum, Topica*, trans. H. M. Hubbell (London, 1949), *De inventione* I.52; see James J. Murphy, *Rhetoric in the Middle Ages: a History of Rhetorical Theory from Saint Augustine to the Renaissance* (Berkeley, 1974), 14.

[120] On the Renaissance emphasis on the emotions in oratory, see Lawrence D. Green, "Aristotle's Rhetoric and Renaissance Views of the Emotions," in *Renaissance Rhetoric*, ed. Peter Mack (London, 1993), 1–25.

[121] Murphy, *Rhetoric in the Middle Ages*, 366, observes that *interrogatio* "reinforces the argument that has just been delivered, after the case against the opponents has been summed up; but not all interrogation is impressive or elegant." Medea is approaching the end of her 60-line speech.

relinquit" (indeed Medea enumerates what she will obtain: if she will have followed Jason: these things indeed seem greater than those she leaves behind; fol. i. iiii r).[122] Finally, as she contemplates the difficulties of their ship's passage through the threatening obstacles of Scylla and Charybdis, Regius interprets her initial questions as dismissive, in view of the greater joy of being Jason's wife. Medea asks, "Quid, quod nescio qui mediis concurrere in undis/dicunter montes ratibus inimica Charybdis/nunc sorbere fretum, nunc reddere, cinctaque saevis/Scylla rapax canibus Siculo latrare profundo?/Nempe tenens, quod amo, gremio in Iasonis haerens/per freta longa ferar" (What of the fact that some mountains are said to clash in the midst of the water; and Charybdis hostile to ships, who now sucks in the waves and now gushes them out; and greedy Scylla, girdled with raging dogs, barking in the sea? Surely, holding on, clinging to the embrace of Jason, whom I love, I will be carried over the long paths of the sea; 7.62–67). Of the opening phrase, "Quid, quod nescio qui," Regius notes that Medea is offering yet another reason to follow Jason: "aliam causam assignat Medea qua Iasonem sequendum esse sibi persuadet" (Medea assigns another reason by which she persuades herself that she must follow Jason; fol. i. iiii r). Again Regius finds the Ovidian heroine deploying a type of courtroom oratory: *causa* had an oratorical/legal usage, referring to the practice of the defense's justification of a particular action. In Quintilian we find *causa* listed as one of the ten categories in Aristotle which come into play for each question under consideration in a case. Quintilian defines *causa* as follows: "Causam, cui plurimae subiacent lites, quotiens factum non negatur, sed quia iusta ratione sit factum, defenditur" (Cause, under which heading come a large number of disputes, whenever a fact is not denied, but the defence pleads that the act was just and reasonable; 3.6.27). Regius also notes that Medea presents objections (*obiectionibus*; fol. i. iiii r) to the possibility that these dangers will be a real threat, again drawing on courtroom discourse to characterize the method of her argument.

The oratorical properties of Medea's monologue provoked a number of extended readings by later commentators, launched in part by Regius' analysis. Before continuing with Regius' readings of other Ovidian heroines, I would like to digress chronologically here to

[122] For *enumeratio*, see *Institutes* 5.14.11.

show the trajectory of this type of reading in the case of one heroine. In 1554 George Sabinus published his commentary on the *Metamorphoses*; like Regius', Sabinus' edition was intended for school use. In a 1584 Cambridge edition, Sabinus clearly draws from Regius' assessment of Medea's monologue, but adds to it. Sabinus characterizes Medea's speech as a *disputatio* (London, British Library 1001.D.19, fol. 256), and states that she "deliberat." Regius himself had used the word "deliberat" (IB 23971, fol. ii. vii r) in his commentary on Myrrha's reflections. As discussed earlier, the Aristotelian principle of woman's impaired deliberative faculty had great staying power in the medieval and early modern periods; MacLean has noted this assumption in many standard Renaissance legal, medical, and scientific texts. Thus the application of "masculine" *deliberatio* to the thoughts of a female character signals the ways that rhetoric (and Ovid's own employment of it) allows a slippage of, or flexibility within, traditional gender categories. Ovid's female orators can deploy the gamut of "masculine" argumentative tactics. Sabinus also provides extended comments on individual key lines of Medea's monologue, employing courtroom rhetoric: "sed huic argumento opponit contrarium," "Deinde argumentatura necessario," and "Haec est summa disputationis" (fol. 257). Sabinus then offers his own paraphrase of her entire speech (fol. 258). He ends with a brief comment on the battle of *ratio* and *affectus* (fol. 260). In this commentary and the 1586 edition to be discussed next, Medea's speech more than any other unleashes a torrent of commentary on its oratorical effects.

By 1586, this approach to the analysis of Medea's monologue seems to have taken hold; in the 1586 Basel edition of the *Metamorphoses*, with commentary by Henry Glareanus and Johannes Hartung, there is an even more extensive analysis of the heroine's speech for its oratorical effects. In fact, the commentators classify the entire speech as belonging to the "genere Deliberativo" (London, British Library, 1001.C.2, fol. 254). To a large extent, all of the speeches of Ovid's heroines could be classified as deliberative, for all ponder over a future path of action. This genre of oratory was used for political subjects, but it was also concerned with determining what was the most honorable course of action in a given situation, according to Quintilian (*Institutes*, book 3); one path of action is weighed against another in a comparative mode. The 1586 commentary, in its analysis of Medea's speech, identifies 22 features of oratory within 50 lines. I will give only a short list here: *propositio, causa efficiens, coniec-*

turae; propositio de hortatoria; syllogismus hypoteticus; congeries; distributio; iuramentum; enumeratio; refutatio; in addition, the entire speech of Medea is divided into four *argumenta* (fols. 254, 255). Medea's speech may have provoked this much attention simply because it offered more rhetorical moves than any other Ovidian heroine's speech. Yet as Rebhorn has shown, the *rhetorici* were also keenly aware of their often fixed social and economic position. Medea, like Scylla, offered a model of resistance to systems of authority, and Medea eventually gained the upper hand. As Zeitlin and Skinner have shown with classical constructions of he feminine, in a culture in which men encountered various limitations (whether social proprieties regarding the expression of emotions, or the lack of upward mobility for those in certain professions), the feminine, particularly in her outspoken form, offered a "channel for imaginative escape."[123] Given the tendency of humanists to conform and subscribe outwardly to systems of authority (as illustrated even in their unwillingness to challenge the authority of the classical *auctor*), the Ovidian heroine with her challenging of authority and occasional breaking of taboos, offered a glimpse of another world of human agency and self-fashioning.

Returning now to Regius' commentary, Scylla's speeches also provide a series of illustrations for the art of rhetoric. Scylla's monologue begins reflecting her state of uncertainty: "Laeter . . . doleamne geri . . . bellum/in dubio est" (I'm not sure whether to be happy or to grieve over this war being waged; 8.44–45). Here Regius remarks, "Cogitationes Scyllae minois amore captae tam aperte a poeta describuntur ut nullam fere exigarit enarrationem" (the thoughts of Scylla captivated by love for Minos, are described so clearly by the poet that they almost require no detailed commentary; fol. k. vi v). When Scylla begins to discuss the possibility of betraying her father by severing his lock and giving it to Minos, Regius employs the verb *ratiocinari*, a verb meaning to "defend, justify oneself, to plead, to reason."[124] Quintilian discusses this term in depth in considering various modes of deliberation in oratory; and in Regius' 1512 commentary on the *Institutes* Regius comments that the Latin *ratiocinari* is equivalent to the Greek syllogism (Oxford, Bodleian, Vet. F1. c. 83; fol. 121v).

Next, as Scylla states that Minos' cause in the war is just, Regius

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[123] These words are Skinner's; see "*Ego Mulier*. The Construction of Male Sexuality in Catullus," 145.

[124] Niermeyer, *Mediae Latinitatis Lexicon Minus*.

identifies this as an instance of fostering the "iustiorem causam" (the more just cause; fol. k. vi v)—a legal usage employed by Cicero and others. When Scylla states that she would brave fire and sword for her love, she observes that in this situation, neither extreme is necessary—only handing over the lock. Regius observes here that Scylla "a facili argumentatur" (draws a conclusion from what is easy, fol. k. vii r), again employing courtroom rhetoric as Scylla winds up her "case." Regius also notes other rhetorical flourishes in Scylla's speech, including *parenthesis acclamationis* and *exclamatio* (fol. k. vii r), devices regularly used in oratory to stir the feelings of the audience in favor of the argument being made. Finally, once Minos has repudiated her gift and offer, Scylla makes a short speech in which Ovid shows an awareness of the ironies of the situation: Minos has gained a new kingdom and new power through Scylla, yet he reviles her and utters a curse against her. Scylla asks where she may go now, deserted (her predicament similar in some ways to Medea's); Regius comments here, "elegans figura qua et rogat et sibi ipsa respondet Scylla" (it is an elegant figure of speech by which Scylla herself both asks and answers herself; fol. k. vii r). Quintilian discusses this figure as *persona*, as we have seen with the "Vulgate." Finally, as Scylla completes her speech against Minos, Ovid again plays on the ironies of the situation: she asks rhetorically whether Minos can hear her words, or if they are blown away by the same wind that has allowed him to set sail. Regius does not comment on this irony but he does remark upon the effectiveness of her question, from a rhetorical standpoint: "particula est interrogativa affectui et indignationi serviens" (this clause is interrogative, aiming at feeling and indignation; fol. k. vii v). Further when Scylla says, "iam iam Pasiphaen non est mirabile taurum/praeposuisse tibi: tu plus feritatis habebas" (now, now it is not a wonder that Pasiphae preferred a bull to you; you were more of a beast than he; 8.136–37), Regius notes how this outburst exemplifies *anadiplosis* and *conduplicatio*, and that it aims at conveying indignation (fol. k. vii v). Of importance here in both cases is Regius' use of the verb *servire*—"to aim at"—a word choice which signals again the pedagogic nature of this commentary, which illustrates for its students the "how-to's" of oratory, including attention to the inflections and passions of the orator, which are worthy of imitation. As I noted earlier, Scylla's unorthodox stance, even claiming each person is his or her own divinity, garnered considerable attention in Renaissance editions, often negative but occasionally not so. The speeches of Ovid's deliberative heroines offered food for thought.

In book 10, Regius finds reason to characterize Orpheus' opening speech to Pluto and Proserpina as an example of persuasive speaking: "Hac oratione Orpheus persuadere conatur Plutoni atque proserpinae" (With this speech Orpheus tries to persuade Pluto and Proserpina; fol. ii. iii v). Later, at the conclusion of the speech, the commentator notes that "Quanta fuerit vis orphei orationis facile hinc colligitur: quod inferos omnes lachrymas emittere coegit" (How great was the power of Orpheus' speech is understood easily from this: that it compelled all of the shades to shed tears; fol. ii. iiii r). When Regius comes to the story of Pygmalion, he offers a comment which is a telling reflection of social practice, and the social roles prescribed for educated young women, in early modern Venice. Ovid describes the face of the statue, "virginis est verae facies, quam vivere credas,/et si non obset reverentia, velle moveri" (it was the face of a real young woman, whom you might think wanted to live and to be moved, if modesty did not hinder it; 10.250–51). Here Regius observes, "*Et si non obstet reverentia.* Acute eleganterque hoc dictum est. Nam virgines bene educate prae pudore in virorum conspectu vix audent se movere" (*If modesty did not hinder it.* Astutely and precisely this has been said. For well-educated girls hardly dare to move themselves, because of modesty, in the sight of men; fol. ii. vi v). This sort of comment by Regius, which indicates his own subscription to (and not only observation of) contemporary social roles calling for the "proper" (even unmoving!) modesty of young women, is on the whole, somewhat rare in his commentary. Here Regius illustrates one means by which masculine rhetoric can function to contain the feminine, to prescribe, and proscribe, female behavior. As I have stated earlier, some commentators may at times participate in "habits of thought" which nevertheless do not dominate their readings; and in fact, as with Regius and Pontanus, it is possible to see some inconsistency of viewpoint on the feminine.

The Myrrha tale further displays Regius' marked attention to Ovid's expertise in rendering complex emotional states, but ultimately in ways which suggest Regius' perhaps exaggerated respect for *auctoritas.* Regius characterizes Myrrha's monologue as a "Figurata oratione," a speech full of rhetorical figures.[125] As in his comments on

[125] This printed comment is found in a 1497 edition of Regius printed by Bevilaqua (Venice); now Uppsala Universiteits Bibliotek, Ink. 35b.914, fol. ii. vii v. This comment is also found in the 1518 Venice edition of Regius (facsimile ed., New York, 1976), fol. 136r. For discussion of *figurae*, see Quintilian, *Institutes* 9.2.27.

other heroines' monologues, Regius incorporates glosses from the "Vulgate"; at 10.344, when Myrrha debates within over her desire, the "Vulgate" commentator offers the remark, "modo se redarguit de concupiscientia sua. unde dicit: *Ultra*" (Consequently she refutes herself concerning her lust. Thus she says: *Further*"; Sélestat MS 92, fol. 94v; Austin MS 34, fol. 96v). Regius' version of this is "*Ultra autem* se ipsam increpat myrrha" (Further; indeed Myrrha berates her very self; fol. ii. vii v). In the scene just prior to that in which Myrrha attempts suicide and then divulges her secret to her nurse, Myrrha cannot sleep because of her tormented state. She tosses and turns, feeling conflicting desires. Regius comments: "Eleganter autem ut omnia poeta exprimit puellae amore ardentis cogitationes atque affectus" (indeed how precisely the poet renders everything, the thoughts and feelings of the girl burning with love; fol. ii. viii r). Given the incestuous nature of Myrrha's feelings, Regius' comment (not derived from the "Vulgate") is evidence that his earlier claims of Ovid's poem as a vehicle for teaching morality have been elided. It is clear, however, that Regius is impressed with the degree to which Ovid can effectively portray emotional and psychological quandaries, whatever their source or motivation. His relative moral neutrality in this case is also proof of his ability to appreciate Ovid's virtuosity in rendering complex emotional states. What his students thought is difficult to say; but Regius is more interested in Ovid's representations of character and the processes of intentionality (*cogitationes*) as vehicles for the teaching of rhetoric, than in exacting a moral judgment (something which at least theoretically could have been possible, given his claims in the preface). A few lines further, Ovid compares her anxious state to a tree which sways in numerous directions before its final fall. Regius comments on Ovid's simile: "Hac autem similitudine ostendit poeta quanta in ambiguitate foret animus Myrrhae" (Indeed with this comparison the poet shows how uncertain Myrrha's state of mind is"; fol. ii. vii r). Regius comments again on the Ovidian heroine's inner struggle as Myrrha falteringly approaches her father's bedroom: "Eleganter autem exprimit gestum timidae virginis aliquid sceleris aggressurae" (For the poet expresses skillfully the step of the timid girl about to approach her sin; fol. o. i r). When commenting on the revelation scene, however, in which Cinyras both discovers his daughter and attempts to slay her, Regius offers no particular assessment of the problematic depiction of Cinyras as righteous avenger. An unfortunate silence prevails on this contradiction (not

necessarily highlighted by Ovid) in medieval and Renaissance commentaries, showing the extent to which the *auctoritas* of the Roman author, and the hermeneutics in commentaries on classical texts in these periods, precluded the possibility of objection, questioning, or dissent.

In the case of Atalanta, Regius presents a close assessment of the troubled thoughts Ovid presents in her monologue, beginning with Hippomenes' boasts that he is a worthy opponent for her. Ovid develops the inner drama:

> With a gentle expression, Schoenius' daughter
> watches him saying such things, and she doubts
> whether she prefers to be conquered or to conquer.
> And so: "what god, hostile to the beautiful,
> wishes this one to lose his life?
> what god orders him to seek this marriage
> at the risk of precious life? I am not worth the price.
> Nor am I moved by his beauty, although I could be.
> But the fact that he is still a boy.
> He himself doesn't affect me, but his young age.
> What of his strength and mind unafraid of death?
> What if he claims descent from Neptune?
> What if he loves; does he value our marriage so much
> That he would die, if a harsh fate denies me to him?
> Stranger, escape this cruel marriage while there is time!
> My marriage is cruel; no girl will refuse to marry you,
> and a wise girl will desire you.
> Why do I care for him when so many suitors have died before?
> Let him see to his own actions! Let him die; since he has not been warned
> by the slaughter of so many suitors
> and he is led into a weariness for life!
> Will he die, therefore, because he wanted to live with me,
> and will he suffer an unworthy death as the price for love?" (609–27)

Regius' commentary is as follows, with lemmata italicized:

> *Nomine* [sic] *iudice tanti.* tam formosus iuvenis debeat perire. *Nec forma tangor.* nec pulchritudine moveor. *Sed quod puer adhuc est.* Subaudiatur tangor. *Et mens interrita leti.* quae nullo mortis timore terretur. *Ab aequorea origine.* neptuno aequoris deo. *Dum licet hospes abi*: Dum potes: recede o peregrine. est autem apostrophe ad hippomenen: quem etsi amice admonere videtur atalanta: ne secum currendo certet: secum tamen ipsa haec loquitur. *Tibi nubere nulla nollet.* hoc est. omnis virgo tibi nubere cupiet. *Viderit.* hippomenes subaudiatur: Haec enim secum cogitans loquitur atalanta. Hippomenis pulchritudine tacta.
> (fols. o. ii v, o. iii r)

> *I am not worth the price.* that so handsome a youth should die. *I am not touched by his beauty.* I am not moved by his looks. *But the fact that he is still a boy.* Let it be understood, I am moved. *And a mind unterrified by death.* he is frightened by no fear of death. *From a watery origin.* from Neptune, god of the ocean. *While it is permitted, stranger,* go while you can. *Draw back, oh foreigner:* now this is an apostrophe to Hippomenes: and yet Atalanta seems to warn him as a friend, not to compete with her in running. She herself speaks these things as though with herself. *No girl will not want to marry you.* This is, every virgin will want to marry you. *Let him see.* Let Hippomenes be understood. Reflecting, Atalanta speaks these things with herself, touched by Hippomenes' beauty.

When Atalanta claims that she is not touched by Hippomenes' appearance, Regius sees through the self-denial in his comment, "Subaudiatur tangor." Regius' more developed assessment of Atalanta's inner world begins with the phrase "hospes," (O foreigner; 620). While the "Vulgate" also notes "O Hypomene" in an interlinear gloss above the word "hospes" (Sélestat, MS 92, fol. 99v), it does not go any further in labeling the rhetorical device. Regius, however, classifies this expression as an apostrophe. But what is most interesting here is Regius' subsequent analysis of her tone: "yet Atalanta seems to warn him as a friend, not to compete with her in running. She herself speaks these things as though with herself." Regius seems influenced in general by the glosses in the "Vulgate" about the heroine's inner speech, for in this passage Regius himself observes it without a specific precedent in the "Vulgate." As with all of Ovid's heroines, Regius perceptively reads her inner dialogue and its subtle tonal shifts. But if Regius admires Ovid's artistry in rendering the complexities of selfhood, reflection, and identity, he also finds these heroines' speeches exemplary models for oratory.

When we turn to Regius' commentary on male characters' psychological terrain, it generally reflects the amount of emphasis Ovid himself devotes to the same. During the race of Atalanta and Hippomenes, for example, the *Ovidius moralizatus* offers a glimpse of the inner anxieties each feels about the other. In the case of Hippomenes, Regius adds little to the readings in the "Vulgate" on the uncertainties Hippomenes feels as he is about to join the race. Regius incorporates wholesale the "Vulgate" commentator's explanation of Hippomenes' fears and envy, which is essentially that Hippomenes worries that envy will become an impediment for him in the race and that someone will outrun him (fol. ii. ix v). Finally, for the pregnant word "exigit" (Hippomenes deliberates; 10.587), Regius offers

the brief "cogitat" (he thinks over; fol. o. ii v). At one other point Regius recognizes the inward struggle afflicting Hippomenes. In 10.607, Hippomenes calls out his challenge to Atalanta as she runs the course; he presents the outcome as one of two alternatives: either she will not be ashamed to have been beaten by him, with his lineage, or "seu vincar, habebis Hippomene victo magnum et memorabile nomen" (or if I am beaten, you will have a great and memorable name for having beaten Hippomenes). The two alternatives may present the young man as somewhat solipsistic; yet Regius comments "*Seu vincar.* Dilemato colligit Hippomenes atalantum [sic] secum certare debere" (*Or if I am beaten.* In a dilemma, Hippomenes considers that Atalanta should contend with him; fol. o. ii. v). A "dilemma" is defined by Lewis and Short as follows: "a double proposition, a dilemma; in logic, an argument in which an adversary is pinned between two difficulties."[126] This time Regius situates the male character's reactions and responses in the context of oratory, rhetoric.

In general Regius comments upon Ovid's skill at representing psychological dilemmas; his approbation of Ovidian interiority can be documented, along with many other humanist (that is to say, literary, rhetorical) interests, throughout the pages of his commentary. It is somewhat paradoxical that, at a time when women were expressly forbidden to learn oratory and eloquence, students learning eloquence and rhetoric from Regius' *Metamorphoses* would see female character after female character (we have examined here only four of six heroines) whose speeches were treated as models of oratory and oratorical effects. And lest we assume that Regius' attention to rhetoric was simply a pedagogic exercise, we should consider Rebhorn's arguments (against some theories to the contrary) about the powerful hold rhetoric had in western Europe in the Renaissance:

> most Renaissance writers on rhetoric continued to think that their art was political, right down to the end of the period. . . . It is quite revealing that even if such writers as Calvalcanti, Vives, and Patrizi insist that rhetoric is essentially associated with republican rule and free states, things that scarcely obtained in the Europe in which they lived,

[126] Charlton T. Lewis and Charles Short, eds., *A Latin Dictionary*, rev. ed. (Oxford, 1975), s. v. "dilemma." The *Glossarium Mediae et Infimae Latinitatis*, ed. Charles DuCange (Niort, 1883–87) cites later Latin usage of *dilemmatus* by such authors as M. Mercator (*dilemmata interrogatio*) and Lucius Rufidius, on the theological question of whether God begot his own son or not.

> that sad fact did not stop them from producing handbooks and treatises in order to teach the subject to contemporaries who lived under signorial or monarchical governments. Moreover, no matter what their persuasion, Renaissance writers on rhetoric generally identify their art with ruling.[127]

Regius himself had written a treatise in praise of eloquence at Padua in 1483, dedicated to eminent officials in Venice (including the *princeps* of the Venetian Senate), and in response to the requests of others; he may have delivered it as an oration.[128]

The publication history of Regius' edition of the *Metamorphoses* also shows how wide its influence was: in 1492 Merula had somehow "acquired" copies of Regius' lecture notes (commentary) on the *Metamorphoses* and rushed to print the edition (adding in errors) himself before Regius printed it. Merula glossed over his own piracy in his edition by merely saying that some great men had brought him some verses of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* to be interpreted; but he does leave Regius' name as part of the edition's title.[129] Such thefts were not uncommon, with Renaissance printers and editors complaining bitterly (as Regius does in the preface to his first "legal" edition).[130] But for Merula, clearly there was a market; rhetoric was widely taught and lecture-aids for rhetorical analysis, such as the lecture notes of a respected scholar like Regius, were eagerly sought. From the evidence of this edition's considerable popularity in western Europe, Regius' scholarship clearly met a need for Renaissance teachers and professors of rhetoric, of which there were many. Indeed, in a volume also containing Regius' 1501 *Metamorphoses* (printed at Lyons), a 1500 edition of the *Heroides* offers a similar detailed treatment of the devices of oratory in the printed commentary by Antonio Volscus.[131] Johannes Wright, who owned the book until 1610, annotates the margins of the *Heroides* so extensively with further instances of rhetorical features and devices of argumentation that he appears to have

[127] Rebhorn, *The Emperor of Men's Minds*, 48, 49.

[128] London, British Library, IA 30002.

[129] ". . . summi uiri nonnulli: et de me quam optime meriti: quibus nihil poteram negare: ad me: ut scis: attullere nonnulla metamorphoseos ouidii carmina interpretanda"; see Steiner, "Source-Editions of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* 1471 1500," 230.

[130] Richardson, *Printing, Writers and Readers in Renaissance Italy*, 42.

[131] Cambridge, King's College, K. 24.15. The *Heroides* edition was printed in Paris; the volume also contains other works of Ovid, including *De Arte Amandi et remedio amoris* (edited by Bartholomaeus Merula), and *In Ibin*. For further discussion of Volscus, see Moss, *Ovid in Renaissance France*, 8–11.

been a teacher or professor of rhetoric himself. This volume also shows that in England as well, by the beginning of the seventeenth century, the epistolary laments of Ovid's heroines were mined for their multiplicity of rhetorical effects, courtroom logic, and oratorical features.

Ovid was one of the few classical authors outside of drama, or apart from the orations of Cicero, who provided characters' speeches—in Ovid's case largely female—packed with dazzling oratorical effects; yet when these male students (wherever their career paths ultimately led them) learned eloquence and rhetoric from Ovid, the featured speakers were female. I do not want to argue that Regius aimed to illustrate rhetoric through female characters, as if he had a particular proto-feminist agenda; however, by providing such detailed analysis of the arts of rhetoric through the example of a multitude of female speakers, he helped shape his students' constructions of the feminine (however abstract the terms). Jordan has demonstrated that there was a limited tradition presenting women as "more rational" than men in the Renaissance, in some humanist defenses of women.[132] These defenses have two shortcomings, for Jordan: they employ exemplary female figures from both history and myth (without distinction); and they feature such women in traditionally male roles ("speaking in council or commanding an army"). According to Jordan, this type of defense, "while it questions sexual stereotypes, that some women can do men's work . . . also seems to confirm gender-related values, that everything female is inferior."[133] Ovid's heroines, while they may be daughters to kings, rarely take on such traditionally "male" public roles; most are caught in psychological dilemmas relating to love or motherhood (for example, Althaea). Indeed, if, like Scylla, they do take on political actions, their acts are not necessarily sanctioned in the narrative. What makes Ovid's heroines unique, then, from a Renaissance perspective, is that while they are positioned in more traditionally "female" roles, they deliberate over their situations with profound feeling but also with keen rational analysis. Regius' school-text of the *Metamorphoses*, in its careful delineation of the complex deliberations of Ovid's heroines, thus provides a "middle way" of considering the feminine in the early modern classroom; like many

[132] Jordan, "Feminism and the Humanists," 251–52.
[133] Ibid., 252.

other constructions of the feminine, Regius', like Ovid's, is not wholly unproblematic. Yet in Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, the male student at a *studium* or university would encounter models of the feminine, even "barristers,"[134] who showed him the arts of public speaking. There he would recognize not only feelings, thoughts, and worries much like his own, but also deliberations, judgments, and processes of intellection and discrimination which were frequently aligned with "masculine" activity in the Renaissance. For Bruni, it may have been unseemly to associate the arts of rhetoric with the feminine; but for Regius the teacher of eloquence and rhetoric, the speeches of Ovid's heroines are indeed good to think with.

Jacob Pontanus, Metamorphoseon, *1618*

> Certe hoc verbum ipsa est veritate verius:
> Mulierem non nisi duos facere laetos dies,
> Unum quo ad thalamum, alium quo ad tumulum ducitur. (71–73)
>
> This word indeed is more true than truth itself:
> That a woman makes none except two days happy:
> The day on which she is led to the marriage-bed, and the day on which she is taken to the tomb.

So speaks Quirinus, a character in Jacob Pontanus' fictional dialogue on the woes of married life, *Dialogus de connubii miseriis* (1580), which draws on Juvenal's satire on women and Petrarch's *De vita solitaria.*[135] Such a perspective on women might be expected from a seventeenth-century Jesuit scholar, yet Pontanus in his edition of the *Metamorphoses* shows a complex range of perspectives. Although Pontanus' "Ovid" is really a commonplace book, it still affords a number of passages in which Ovid's heroines are featured. Yet Pontanus' 1618 edition of the *Metamorphoses*, printed in Antwerp, excludes completely a num-

[134] Shakespeare's Portia also illustrates an early attempt to project an image of a female character successfully employing courtroom rhetoric. For more on Portia and the complex social issues surrounding the learned woman in the Renaissance, see Lisa Jardine, "Cultural Confusion and Shakespeare's Learned Heroines: 'These are old paradoxes'" *Shakespeare Quarterly* 38 (1987), 1–18.

[135] Jacobus Pontanus, "Dialogus de connubii miseriis," ed. Fidel Radle, in *Virtus et Fortuna: Festschrift fur Hans-Gert Roloff*, ed. Joseph P. Strelka (Bern, 1983), 297, 309; Paul Richard Blum, "Jacobus Pontanus SJ," in *Deutsche Dichter der fruhen Neuzeit (1450–1600): Ihr Leben und Werk*, ed. Stephan Fussel (Berlin, 1993), 633. "Pontanus" appears to have been a pen name; his actual last name was Spanmüller.

ber of myths which involve sexually explicit material, incest, or attention to the heroine's plight, reflecting Jesuit approaches to secular and pagan literature. In the middle of the sixteenth century allegorizations of Ovid's poem had been banned by the Council of Trent.[136] Moss, whose study of printed editions of Ovid extends past France to Germany, the Low Countries, and Italy, observes:

> The Jesuits adopt a rigorous policy of selection which appears to ban the *Metamorphoses* from the syllabus, but in fact encourages the publication of books of excerpts, which proliferate in the seventeenth century. We seem to have moved away from the encyclopaedic ideal of the earlier humanists, who envisaged the individual student with his note-book systematizing all knowledge and giving it expression, towards a much more restrictive view-point, which uses the common-place book as a means of selecting out of ancient literature only those passages which meet approval.[137]

In Pontanus' edition, what is censored is as telling as what has been left in. To give just a short list of passages excised from this edition: there is no Scylla/Nisus episode (book 8), no account of Orpheus' transfer from heterosexual to homosexual love, no inclusion of Pygmalion's erotic participation in the transformation of his statue into a woman, and no sign of the Myrrha/Cinyras story. Pontanus does leave in two episodes which feature the Ovidian heroine and her plight, those of Medea and Atalanta; this time the non-incestuous heterosexual love relationship receives focus. Pontanus' edition was clearly, as with many previous versions of the *Metamorphoses*, intended as a school text. Moss comments that the text was published "with the annotations of Jacob Pontanus . . . written to accommodate Ovid's poem to the educational program the Jesuits had been elaborating in fine detail since the 1570s." She also remarks upon the specific nature of Jesuit schooling in the classics at this time: Pontanus' edition "reflects attitudes to the *Metamorphoses* disseminated throughout Counter-Reformation Europe by the dominant Jesuit school system, which gave an important place to the study of Latin poetry—especially in the classes of humanity and rhetoric, through which a boy would pass

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[136] *Die Indices Librorum Prohibitorum des Sechzehnten Jahrhunderts*, ed. Fr. Heinrich Reusch (Tubingen, 1886; reprint, 1961), 275: "In Ovidii Metamorphoseos libros commentaria sive enarrationes allegoricae vel tropologicae."

[137] Moss, *Ovid in Renaissance France*, 41. See also Blum, "Jacobus Pontanus SJ," 626-35.

before his final years' schooling in natural science and philosophy."[138] However traditional Pontanus' approach to other aspects of Ovid as a classical author, his treatment of gender in Ovid is complicated and often contradictory. As much as any previous commentator, Pontanus illustrates the unstable propensity medieval and early modern commentators have to draw upon established "habits of thought" in their responses to classical representations of the feminine.

Pandolpho, a character in John Florio's 1591 Italian guidebook entitled *Second Frutes*, offers an assessment of the feminine which will serve to illustrate at least one way in which Pontanus responds to Ovid's heroines: Pandolpho states that "words are Feminine & deedes are Masculine."[139] Both Regius and Pontanus praise Ovid for his ability to portray psychological complexity in his heroines; for Regius the adjective repeatedly is *eleganter*, "precisely, elegantly, appropriately." Pontanus describes Medea's tormented monologue as a "dialogus mentis" a mental dialogue or debate (fol. 246).[140] He remarks that this sort of battle, or "deliberatio," can be seen also in Ovid's heroines Scylla and Althaea (fol. 408)—heroines who are themselves silenced in Pontanus' own edition. Pontanus clearly recognizes Ovid's penchant for this sort of material but more often than not throughout the *Metamorphoseon*, he chooses to omit "female words" in favor of "masculine deeds" as his way of constructing Ovid's *auctoritas*. Perhaps the psychological turmoil issuing in extended heroines' monologues in the *Metamorphoses'* middle books, is reason enough for its censoring and thus censuring. Yet Pontanus' use of the word "deliberatio" is striking, regardless of whether Pontanus was aware of its history. Whether Pontanus observed this word in the 1586 Basel edition (which, as discussed above, classifies Medea's speech under "genere Deliberativo"; BL 1001.C.2., fol. 254) or in an earlier edition of Micyllus, he incorporates a word whose history is highly fraught, given Renaissance views of the feminine and intellectual capacity. Yet Pontanus both invokes this new terminology and then proceeds to ignore earlier rhetorical and oratorical analyses of the speech, and turns to a completely Christianizing hermeneutics.

When Pontanus analyzes Medea's inner battle over love or home-

[138] Moss, *Latin Commentaries on Ovid from the Renaissance*, 159.

[139] John Florio, *Second Frutes* (London, 1591), 179. Quoted in Davies, *Humanism*, 87.

[140] Jacob Pontanus, ed., *Metamorphoseon*, 1618 facsimile edition (New York, 1976).

land, he interprets the conflict as a symptom of original sin, calling in first Cicero on the Stoic view that the human must regulate his passions, and then Paul on the battle between the flesh and the spirit. Although Pontanus praises Ovid's characterization of the inner conflict of Medea, he does it only after lamenting that such a battle indicates vestiges of original sin:

> Quoniam ergo haec pars animi, in qua existunt hi motus, imperium alterius, & superioris, ac melioris accipere saepius recusat, aut tergiversatur; hinc assiduum paene & intestinum in nobis bellum, cuius semina ac primordia in ipsis generis humani principibus & protoplastis antecessisse: ab iisdem deinde in omnem posteritatem cum ipso semine mirabiliter & miserabiliter transfusa . . . hoc duellum & hic ab Ovid. in Medea, & in aliis per hosce libros ingeniose ac diserte explicatur.

> Since therefore, this part of the soul, in which there exist these impulses, quite frequently refuses to accept the higher, superior, and better command, or turns its back on it; hence there is a nearly continuous and civil war in us, and its seeds and beginnings already existed in the very origins of the human race, in the first human beings. Thereafter they were discharged with the seed itself, wondrously and wretchedly, from them to all their posterity . . . Ovid discourses with great cleverness and eloquence on this war, both here in Medea, and in other [characters] throughout these books. (fol. 246 n. 10)

Ultimately Pontanus returns to the classification of Medea's turmoil as "furor." Medea's inner quandary, what we might view today as the emergence in narrative of psychological interiority, will for Pontanus serve to illustrate the human propensity toward sin, rebellion, and anarchy.

When Pontanus turns to the Pygmalion story, he includes only the section relating Pygmalion's disenchantment with women, and his decision to live unmarried, narrative sympathetic enough for the Jesuit editor. When at the end of this narrative segment Ovid characterizes the Propoetides' transformation into stone, he provides Pygmalion's response:

> Quas quia Pygmalion aevum per crimen agentis
> viderat, offensus vitiis, quae plurima menti
> femineae natura dedit, sine coniuge caelebs
> vivebat thalamique diu consorte carebat. (10.243–46)

> Because Pygmalion had seen them passing their lives in wrong-doing, he was offended by their depravity, which nature has given abundantly to the feminine mind, he lived without a wife and for a long time lacked a consort of his bed.

Pygmalion is horrified by the Propoetides' behavior and turns from womankind, later to construct his own woman from ivory. But in these lines Pontanus seizes upon two key elements: Ovid's adage about the nature of woman; and Pygmalion's celibacy. First, Pontanus comments upon Pygmalion's offense at the *vitiis* of these women, reading the vitiis as "libidinibus earum, quibus se immerserant, & aliis, quibus pro natura muliebri laborabant" (their lusts, in which they had immersed themselves, and others, with which women struggled by nature; fol. 403r; line 244). Pontanus' comments for Ovid's maxim, that nature has endowed the feminine mind with many evils, show unqualified support:

> Feminam, utpote mollem natura, subiectam esse perturbationibus animi vehementer, ac difficile sibi posse imperare, norunt omnes. Itaque haud mirum, si generatim dicamus, vitiosas esse mulieres. Et sane multa de iis mala praedicat Ecclesiasticus cap. 25. & 26. In monostichis. . . . Thesaurus est omnis mali mala femina. (fol. 403; line 244)

> All know that woman, as weak by nature, is violently subject to disturbances of the mind, and can only command herself with difficulty. And so it is no wonder, if we say generally, that women are full of evils. And Eccesiasticus chapters 25 and 26 certainly preaches many evil things about them. In the monostich: "The evil woman is a storehouse of all evil."

Pontanus then speaks approvingly of Pygmalion's choice to turn from women and to take up a life of celibacy, referring to it as the "vitam caelestem" (the heavenly life; fol. 403, line 245). Here Pontanus echoes a line of commentators, drawing himself from Regius, who provides a similar comment "quasi caelestem vitam agens" (fol. ii.v.v); Regius himself draws from the "Vulgate" in its own gloss: "caelibem vitam ducens" (Austin, MS 34, fol. 95r). Although Pontanus elsewhere praises (fol. 6) and draws on Regius' commentary, Regius does not offer any comments in this passage on the evils of woman. Having so far found Pygmalion a compatriot in repudiating the flesh, Pontanus abruptly censors the remainder of the Pygmalion story, omits all of the Myrrha tale, and proceeds directly to the Atalanta/Hippomenes myth.

As the story commences, and Atalanta has stated the conditions of the race, Ovid observes that, despite the harshness of the rules of the game, so great is the power of beauty (*sed tanta potentia formae est*; 10. 573) that a crowd of suitors risked their lives for her. Pontanus uses the observation as a chance to enrich his commentary with a

learned quote from Anacreon; as Pontanus explains in his gloss on this line:

> *Sed tanta potentia formae est.* quanta scilicet maior nulla: ut non miremur procos tam immitem & crudelem legem non recusasse. forma muliebri ferrum & ignem vinci, dicit Anacreon. A muliere affirmant diuinae litterae prostratos esse fortissimos. Copiosum daretur esse in hoc argumento: sed res non postulat. (fol. 408 n. 573)

> *But so great is the power of beauty,* that there is no greater: so that we not wonder at the suitors, that they did not refuse so harsh and cruel a condition. Anacreon says that fire and sword can be conquered by womanly beauty. The scriptures confirm that the strongest men are leveled by a woman. A very complete case might be given for this argument, but the matter at hand does not require it.

In this comment Pontanus links feminine beauty with danger, even as Ovid does, although Ovid does not pass particular judgment on Atalanta's beauty. Anacreon's maxim may be regarded as misogynist, in that the blame can be seen to be located in the woman's beauty; however, in the proverb traditional masculine enterprise, associated with the fire and sword, is not represented particularly flatteringly if it is vulnerable to something so fleeting. It is true that Ovid and therefore Pontanus devote more narrative space to the depiction of Atalanta's beauty (10.563; 573; 578–81; 588–96) than to Hippomenes' (614; 631); further complicating questions of emphasis here are the narrators: Orpheus and Venus tell this tale. In the race, Atalanta is certainly an object of the male gaze (at least for spectators, and classical through early modern readers, if not for her exhausted suitors), yet Ovid complicates his representation of her such that she is not simply "on display" (as for example Emily of Chaucer's Knight's Tale) but actively deliberating throughout this race, choosing to alter her future, irrevocably.

It is with the Atalanta monologue that we can see a more complex view of Pontanus as reader of Ovid's heroines. As Paul Blum has argued, Pontanus does not fit easily into the paradigm of the "typisch jesuitisch."[141] Pontanus was one of the "most significant Jesuit dramatists" in Germany, known for "martyr and Biblical drama."[142]

[141] Blum, "Jacobus Pontanus SJ," 628.

[142] Lewis W. Spitz, "The Course of German Humanism," *Itinerarium Italicum*, 428 n. 104.

In 1594 Pontanus' *Poeticorum institutorum libri tres* was printed; this collection included *Immolatio Isaaci* and *Stratocles*; in 1615 Pontanus' edition of *Dramata sacra* was printed.[143] It may be his sensitivity to the drama which enables him to appreciate the dramatic aspects of the Ovidian heroine's monologue. As Lewis Spitz argues, "The Jesuits drew upon classical and humanistic sources for their famous school dramas."[144] In providing his commentary for this myth, Pontanus often appears to set aside the antifeminist ideology which worked so well in the myth of Pygmalion; here instead he reveals himself to be an astute observer of human nature. Even if his comments are not "personal," they reflect a perceptive grasp of the character psychology Ovid develops within both Atalanta and Hippomenes. After Atalanta looks sympathetically (*molli vultu*; 10.609) on Hippomenes, she begins her monologue with the question, "quis deus hunc formosis . . . iniquus/perdere vult caraeque iubet discrimine vitae/coniugium petere hoc?" (What god, jealous of handsome youths, wants this one to die and bids him to seek this marriage at the cost of his life? 10.611–13). Pontanus offers a complimentary assessment of the entire speech: "placido vultui respondet placida oratio" (a gentle speech answers to a gentle expression; 408 n. 611). Here he draws on Regius' own comment: "molli vultu: miti ac mansueto" (sweet face: mild and gentle; IB 23971, fol. ii. ix v). Pontanus continues, likening Atalanta's interior speech to that of Ovid's other heroines: "Sed ea mentis fuit, non vocis, estque talis deliberatio, qualis Medeae, Althaeae, Scyllae, &c." (But this is the mind's, not the voice's, [deliberation], and is a deliberation such as [that of] Medea, Althaea, Scylla, and so on; 408 n. 611). With Medea, Pontanus chooses to ignore the received commentary which delineates the rhetorical properties of her speech so as to provide his own excursus on original sin; with Atalanta, he chooses to incorporate earlier readings, some of which reflect the humanist fascination with rhetoric. Pontanus recognizes the inward nature of the traditional Ovidian heroine's monologue here; but he also characterizes Atalanta's thoughts as gentle, rather than (as with the Propoetides) the perturbations of the feminine mind, stirred up by vice. It is this sort of variation in Pontanus, and in other com-

[143] Leicester Bradner, "List of Original Neo-Latin Plays Printed Before 1650," *Studies in the Renaissance* 4 (1957), 66.

[144] Spitz, "The Course of German Humanism," 427.

mentators (such as Giovanni), between a praise/blame hermeneutic and one capable of regarding the feminine in other, more thoughtful ways, which prompts the possibility that Pontanus and others participated in certain "habits of thought" regarding gender but were not wholly controlled by (or even wholly conscious of) them.

In the middle of Atalanta's monologue, she shifts to a defensive posture, beginning with a denial that Hippomenes' looks have affected her, and continuing with a series of "what if?" clauses. I quote the passage again for ease of reference:

> nec forma tangor (poteram tamen hac quoque tangi),
> sed quod adhuc puer est: non me movet ipse, sed aetas.
> quid, quod inest virtus et mens interrita leti?
> quid, quod ab aequorea numeratur origine quartus?
> quid, quod amat tantique putat conubia nostra,
> ut pereat, si me fors illi dura negarit? (10.614–19)

> Nor am I moved by his beauty, although I could be, but by the fact that he is still a boy. He himself doesn't affect me, but his young age. What of his strength and mind unafraid of death? What if he claims descent from Neptune? What if he loves; does he value our marriage so much that he would die, if a harsh fate denies me to him?

Pontanus, following Regius' lead, captures the irony with which Ovid imbues Atalanta's opening denial, "nec forma tangor (poteram tamen hac quoque tangi)," by explicating it as follows: "non me movet forma, quamvis, si ea movear, reprehenda non sim: magna est enim potentia formae, ut dicebat supra, & imperat illa diis quoque" (his looks do not move me, although, if I am moved, I am not to be rebuked: for great is indeed the power of beauty, as was said above, and it rules the gods also; fol. 409 n. 614). Here Pontanus grants that human beauty exerts a powerful influence, regardless of the sex of its possessor. He then proceeds to analyze the logical progression of her thought at this stage, classifying the four successive interrogatives *quod*? or *quid, quod*? into four *rationes* and pausing to analyze each (thus observing rhetorical *distinctiones* within his commentary).[145] As he states, Atalanta proceeds now to give four reasons for which she should not enter into the race with Hippomenes: *Proferuntur rationes*

[145] Pontanus may be passing on earlier comments here; however, they do not appear in a 1545 Micyllus edition (British Library 834.1.16) which includes the commentary of Regius, Glareanus, and others.

quatuor, ob quas merito a certamine cum eo ineundo abhorreat (fol. 409 n. 615). The first has to do with his age: he is too young to die; the second, with his bravery: he defies death. The third reason Atalanta gives has to do with the nobility of his family line; and here Pontanus traces the genealogy to which her question refers: *quid, quod ab aequorea numeratur origine quartus?* (617). Then he observes that Medea herself had provided a similar set of reasons for which she should not allow Jason to be slain, quoting *Metamorphoses* 7.26–28:

> *Quem, nisi crudelem, non tangat Iasonis aetas?*
> *Et genus, & virtus? quem non, ut caetera desint*
> *Forma movere potest? certe mea pectora mouit.*
>
> Whom, except the cruel, does Jason's youth not move?
> And his family line, and his excellence? whom, let the rest be lacking,
> Cannot be moved by his beauty? it moves my heart indeed.

Like Atalanta, Medea had cited Jason's youth, family, and bravery. For Atalanta's fourth reason, articulated in the question, "quid, quod amat tantique putat conubia nostra,/ut pereat, si me fors illi dura negarit?" (What if he loves; does he value our marriage so much that he would die, if a harsh fate denies me to him? 10.618–19), Pontanus comments, "Quarta ratio amor. Nostri amantes velle debemus tueri potius & conservare, quam discrimini offere, ac perdere" (the fourth reason is love. We should want to watch over those we love and protect them, rather than to offer them up to peril and lose them; fol. 409 n. 618). Atalanta goes on to warn Hippomenes not to compete, that some girl will want to marry him:

> Quo persuadeat illi ut cupidinem certandi abijciat, laudat formam, & promittit facillime tori sociam inventurum, etiam caram & sapientem, quales maritis suis magno sunt solatio & delectamento, ut magno dolori fatuae. Insinuat item Atalanta his verbis, se non stultam esse. (n. 621)
>
> By which she persuades him that he should do away with his desire for competing, she praises his beauty, and she promises that he will very easily find a partner for his bed, indeed, dear and wise, what great comfort and delight they are for their husbands, that [they are] foolish for great pain. Atalanta further suggests with these words that she is not foolish.

Here Pontanus treats Atalanta's counsel to Hippomenes not to marry her as fodder for misogamy in general; she shows her wisdom by realizing how foolish one is to marry. That Pontanus himself had written the *Dialogus de connubii miseriis* (1580), is perhaps not surpris-

ing. For the most part, however, his assessment of Atalanta's inner deliberations is relatively free from antifeminist or misogamous "habits of thought." Next, when Atalanta objects, "sed non culpa mea est!" (but it is not my fault!; 10.629), Pontanus comments, "In contrariam partem nunc. arguit eius pertinaciam, & se excusat Atalanta" (Now the other side [of the dispute]. Atalanta blames his rashness and excuses herself; fol. 409 n. 629). Here Pontanus invokes again the language of courtroom oratory: the phrase *contrariam partem* is used by Cicero to refer to both sides of a legal dispute;[146] furthermore, *arguere* is also frequently used in a legal context to mean "accuse, charge with." As a final example of Pontanus' sensitivity to Ovid's portrait of Atalanta's own evasions, we might consider his comments on Atalanta's lament while gazing at Hippomenes' innocent face: "A! quam virgineus puerili vultus in ore est!" (Oh, how girlish an expression is on his boyish face! 10.631).[147] Pontanus remarks of Atalanta's sympathetic exclamation, that

> Principio negabat se moveri eius specie liberali, quamvis & hac posset: sed alias ob causas invitam cum eo currere. Modo aperte ostendit, se illum ob raram formam miserari. (fol. 409 n. 631)
>
> In the beginning she denied that she was moved by his noble appearance, although she could be moved by this too: but that on account of other reasons she was unwilling to run with him. Now openly she shows that she has pity on him because of his extraordinary beauty.

Pontanus here seems to say not that Atalanta is motivated only by her attraction to Hippomenes, since the edition has commented fully on the whole range of factors and considerations contributing to her turmoil, but rather that Ovid has portrayed Atalanta first denying an original attraction to Hippomenes which, in the course of her monologue, eventually came to the surface.

As the Atalanta story concludes, Pontanus offers readings which show how far this particular myth has evolved in the complex history of commentary traditions on Ovid's poem. He views the three golden apples as symbolic of desire, attraction, and love, citing parallel

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[146] Cicero, *De Oratore*, in *Rhetorica*, ed. A. S. Wilkins (Oxford, 1969), vol. 1; examples from the *De Oratore* can be found at 1.34.158 and 2.53.215.

[147] Anderson notes that elsewhere Ovid describes a young male character with a "natural admixture of girlishness," citing Ovid's description of Iphis (9.712–13); *Ovid's "Metamorphoses": Books 6–10*, 527 nn. 631, 632.

passages in Theocritus, Virgil, and Horace. Pontanus finally relates how Venus becomes incensed by Hippomenes' failure to thank her and afflicts the two with sudden desire for each other, how they desecrate Cybele's temple, and how they are finally turned into lions for their blasphemy; what Pontanus adds in these passages are details relating to ancient religious practice, rites, and worship. In sum, Pontanus shows himself capable of a range of perspectives on the feminine; to some degree the extent of impartiality he shows in this regard is a function of the heroine's own culpability. Medea is a far more notorious heroine: she may suffer, but she is also known for her atrocities; Atalanta is more clearly a victim of the fates, and sympathetic in her compassion for Hippomenes. These differences may account to an extent for the different hermeneutics applied to the two heroines' monologues, for example. Pontanus manifests the tendency to subscribe to antifeminist "habits of thought" still in place among some early modern clerics; yet he, like other commentators, may several folios later dispense with such an ideology in favor of a more detached, or even more sympathetic reading of an Ovidian heroine. Although he may censor the speech of some Ovidian heroines completely, and add misogynist readings to the commentary on others, he can just as readily analyze the speech of Atalanta for its rhetorical effects and logic. Like Regius, Pontanus can (though less frequently) treat the Ovidian heroine's speech as a model for oratory. The increased emphasis on rhetoric and oratory in the early modern classroom, in a sense, forces an even greater dissonance within the Jesuit Pontanus' readings than that already found in the moralizing commentaries of other clerics: the policy of censorship silences the Ovidian heroine in one section of the text, and the featured place of rhetoric in the classroom recuperates her monologues in others, invoking again, for male students in the schools of early modern Germany, the striking figure of the female barrister. In paradoxical ways in Pontanus much more than in Regius, the feminine is both silenced and later "good to think with."

The heterogeneity of responses we find in readings of the feminine in medieval and early modern commentaries shows that some recent scholarship, which misrepresents clerical discourse as conveying only a polarizing representation of the feminine, is fundamentally short-sighted. In many cases (not all) commentators, in explicating individual lines throughout Ovid's poem, will give as much care to the lines detailing Ovid's heroines' quandaries, as to any other part

of Ovid's poem. If this attention does not always reflect sympathy, or a passion for the dramatic episode (something which appears to have driven Walsingham), it most certainly does not reflect *antipathy* toward the feminine, in the ways that we have been taught to expect from medieval and early modern commentators. In some cases, their non-moralizing comments are a function of the pedagogy requiring close explication of individual lines of verse; yet this very pedagogic practice provided an alternative, at times less partial assessment of male and female characters which also made its contribution to the listening student's, or reader's, construction of the feminine. That is, medieval and early modern commentators, as the above passages illustrate, do not uniformly apply *in malo/in bono* readings of the feminine. Such readings do surface as the traditions develop, but they do not dominate clerical hermeneutics applied to the *Metamorphoses* in these periods.

CONCLUSION

Ovid's choice to abandon many of the standard features of epic narrative allowed him to explore a variety of heroines' inner quandaries under the larger umbrella of "metamorphosis" without having to connect the tales of these heroines in the logic of a larger "plot." His chief contribution to his literary successors in his depiction of female characters was his decision to endow them with a considerably enlarged capacity for deliberation and self-scrutiny. Although on the whole Ovid innovates more with the heroine's psychological landscape, Orpheus' song, with all of its indirection and evocative imbedded tales, shows Ovid's interest also in the development of the male character's inner landscape. This psychological interest with which Ovid and his neoteric predecessors imbued their poetry was a feature which often elicited comment from medieval and early modern readers, commentators, and/or editors of the *Metamorphoses*. As I discussed in the foregoing chapters, even commentators wishing to sanitize the monologues of Ovid's female characters regularly paid tribute to the Roman poet's remarkable achievements in conveying the complexities of the heroine's inner world. In constructing his heroines' speeches Ovid was relying on traditional representations of the feminine in classical drama and in Alexandrian poetry. Yet for Euripides, for Ovid, and for many of Ovid's commentators in the Middle Ages and the early modern period, the feminine sometimes proved "good to think with."[1]

Ovid's accomplishments in the depiction of female interiority are, as I have noted, not without drawbacks. But if his heroines voice their dilemmas through the only extended discourse sanctioned for female characters, they still present a far more complex subjectivity for all of that than any previous classical heroines did; thus, through their extended, deliberative speeches, Ovid contributes a real advance in the representation of feminine subjectivity and agency in western

[1] Again it should be noted that Euripides would have remained largely unknown to the Middle Ages, but also that Ovid functioned as a conduit for Euripides' accomplishments in the rendering of female subjectivity.

narrative literature. Ovid's portrait gallery of heroines from the middle books of the *Metamorphoses* shares certain similarities with the representation of characters in his *Heroides*; yet in the *Metamorphoses*, Ovid is at work to fill out aspects of characterization necessarily lacking in the epistolary genre. The monologues of the *Metamorphoses* themselves share certain rhetorical features. But it appears that for Ovid a central project in this poem was the grouping of such heroines and the rigorous exploration of the types of dilemmas and quandaries presented by love conflicts. In classical dramatic and narrative literature, and in the writings of the early Christian era (as Brown has argued), the feminine offered perhaps the only viable way to represent private deliberations of intentionality and conscience.

In some ways medieval and Renaissance commentaries on Ovid's *Metamorphoses* perpetuate long-time binary readings of the feminine; Garland, who taught some married male pupils, reads gender in these finally limiting ways. Regius can at times reflect this hermeneutic, and Pontanus as well. But this is not the whole story. Although some commentaries exclude discussion or notice of the heroines' monologues as monologues *per se*, one trademark of the middle books of the *Metamorphoses*, others do provide an array of responses. It is important to consider the whole range of ways in which a medieval or early modern male (and occasionally female) pupil encountered the feminine in literary texts and commentaries. In the early thirteenth century, William of Orléans engages Ovid's focus on psychological dilemmas, in some ways laying the groundwork for the "Vulgate." A complete edition of the poem used as a school text, the "Vulgate" offers a marginal "play-by-play" of the individual (particularly female) character's thoughts, in part because the running commentary explicates much of the text of Ovid it accompanies, but also because of an apparently genuine interest in such matters. It also reveals that the heroines' monologues in the *Metamorphoses* were analyzed in the classroom for their rhetorical and oratorical properties. Given the comparatively wide circulation of the "Vulgate," it is likely that contemporary medieval poets had some access to this version of Ovid's poem. As we have seen, Regius' commentary, first printed in the late fifteenth century but widely used through the early seventeenth, frequently echoes the "Vulgate" commentary in its readings of the feminine. Thomas Walsingham's *Archana deorum*, while perhaps not a school text, may be significant for late medieval

English prehumanist readings of the classical *auctores*. Walsingham seems to adopt the fascination with female interiority which is witnessed in the "Vulgate" (although without the latter's direct influence); as I have noted, Walsingham frequently pauses in his summary of Ovid's poem to incorporate extensive quotations from passages in which the heroine struggles with a profound conflict of loyalties.

Regius and Pontanus remark differently upon the Ovidian heroine's quandaries; for Regius, there is genuine approbation of the Roman poet's skill, yet occasional reluctance to interrogate the more problematic aspects of the myths he comments upon (such reluctance to challenge classical authority is, however, a principle of humanist hermeneutics in general). Regius' chief contribution is launching a full-scale tradition of readings of the heroines which pays close attention to their speeches as models of oratory—to an even greater extent than in the "Vulgate." Regius' edition, popular in Europe from 1493 through the mid-seventeenth century, taught not only students but later editors and commentators to consider these heroines and their speeches seriously. Humanist scholars who on the one hand might agree with Aristotle's decrees about the inferior intellect of women, would just as readily ascribe "ratiocinatio," "syllogismus," and a whole range of other intellectual feats heretofore purportedly only the province of men, to the speeches of Ovid's heroines. A final illustration of the contradictory nature of the Renaissance commentator's readings of the feminine is Jacob Pontanus, something of a hybrid of scholarly humanist and moralizing cleric. For Pontanus, a Medea's interior monologue with its psychological turmoil is an indicator of original sin; however, Pontanus can just as readily treat Ovidian female interiority without subscribing to a praise or blame hermeneutic: with Atalanta, Pontanus reflects the growing fascination with the Ovidian heroine's speech as model of rhetorical sophistication and courtroom logic. There are indeed contradictions in the humanist "project" as it dealt with the feminine, and in many ways Ovid's own contributions in female characterization forced such contradictions, such confusion, in humanist work. The speeches of Ovid's heroines displayed not only every rhetorical trick in the book, they also reflected keen logic and argumentation: a troubling yet mesmerizing confluence for the humanist commentator. Again, it should be stressed that the focus throughout this study has been on clerical readings of the feminine as an abstract category, as opposed to

clerical views of real women, which likely differed to a large extent.

The object of this study has not been to demonstrate, against conventional wisdom, that these clerics had an exclusively positive regard for the feminine, but rather to show that medieval and Renaissance clerical discourse on the feminine in Ovid is heterogeneous and complex: at times, intentionally or not, participating in a praise or blame hermeneutic, but also at times abandoning it for a range of responses which fall outside of that limiting paradigm. In other words, simple, sweeping generalizations about medieval and early modern clerics' readings of the feminine are finally inadequate. Characterizing such clerics' discourse as only binary or reflecting only containment or subversion is, to borrow Louis Montrose's words, "so reductive, polarized, and undynamic as to be of little or no conceptual value."[2] What is most troubling about such limiting characterizations is that they take no account of the complexities of different cultural contexts, different historical influences, and especially the fact that a range of different hermeneutic approaches on the feminine can issue from the same "institution of power," even within the same period and geographic region. There is no question that many commentaries pass down received commentary, but thoughtful commentators generally leave their own mark on the commentary they contribute.

It might be argued that classtext commentary, when offering only paraphrases of words within a heroine's speech, annotations summarizing her actions, or classifications of components of her speech as features of rhetoric and argumentation, does not reveal a commentator's perspective on the feminine in the same way that a moralizing commentary, with its praise/blame approach, does. Clearly, moralizing commentaries and the more literal commentaries of school editions operate using fundamentally different hermeneutics. Editions of Ovid's poem which were used as a classtexts often incorporate such moralizing commentary on the same folio, but generally in a separate place (top or bottom margin, for example). Some moralizing commentaries on Ovid (which seem to offer the binary approach more often) were in fact taught in the classroom. However, editions such as the "Vulgate" and that of Raphael Regius (itself to be subsumed by that of Micyllus in the sixteenth century) were widely used in classrooms, and it seems that the "business" of these commen-

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[2] Montrose, "Professing the Renaissance," 22.

taries, as they address the heroine and her speeches, is to mediate not only classical lore but Ovid's own emphases (including the psychological) as they proceed line by line through the poem. Medieval and Renaissance clerics increasingly analyzed the speeches of Ovid's heroines for their rhetorical properties (including their logic and argumentation), using them as models for male students learning the arts of eloquence in Europe and England. Ovid's creation of a heroine given to extensive deliberations over moral and ethical issues not only contributed to a developing trend of using the feminine to explore questions of conscience and intentionality, but also in many ways forced the clerics of later periods to grapple with a figure at odds with received wisdom on the feminine. In some ways Ovid's heroines, in their speeches, if not their actions, transgressed various social boundaries. Yet, as Zeitlin has argued with regard to Greek drama but with application for later western literature, the greater investment in interiority in the literary and dramatic representations of the feminine provided an essential (at times solitary) window for the exploration of certain aspects of the human psyche.

In understanding how medieval and Renaissance clerics thought about and presented the feminine to students and other types of readers, it is essential that we consider all forms of "clerical work"—and particularly the school texts which shaped generation after generation of minds. It is also important that we consider the whole range of comments offered on any aspect of a heroine, so as to gain a more complete picture of how the feminine was read in the classroom. Furthermore, it should be remembered that there is a considerable body of medieval and early modern Latin commentaries—many unread to date—on a whole range of classical and other authors;[3] these too should be studied so as to offer a more complete picture of clerical discourse in all its variations. For too long the works of a few commentators on Ovid (mostly those in modern printed editions, such as the *Allegoriae* of Arnulf and the commentary in the *Ovide moralisé*) have received the exclusive focus and have been assumed to be somehow representative of the rest; yet while moralizing commentaries were widely written and read in these periods,

[3] I appreciate Frank Coulson's confirmation of this in the case of Ovid in particular. See further the ongoing scholarship in the *Catalogus Translationum et Commentariorum: Mediaeval and Renaissance Latin Translations and Commentaries*, eds. Paul Kristeller, Virginia Brown, F. Edward Cranz, et al., (Washington, 1960–), now in seven volumes.

they represent only one tradition of commentary on Ovid's poem. Further study of the extant body of clerical commentaries, not only on Ovid but on classical and other authors, will enable us to make more historically responsible statements about the nature of medieval and Renaissance clerical discourse. Certain prominent approaches may surface, and again, I do not wish to deny the presence, even persistence, of negative (because polarizing) readings of gender in the commentaries of these periods. But as Wayne Rebhorn has shown even with the range of ways rhetoric itself was gendered when personified in the Renaissance, these are complex questions, and frequently readings of gender in rhetoric varied greatly from one Renaissance author to the next, in a myriad of forms and configurations. By the Renaissance, Ovidian heroine's speeches became extremely useful models for the teaching of rhetoric and eloquence. But beyond their utility for teaching the arts of oratory, these speeches also explore powerful questions of conscience, intentionality, even loyalty to authorities of different kinds. As Zeitlin puts it in describing the function of the feminine in Greek drama, "the final paradox may be that theater uses the feminine for the purposes of imagining a fuller model for the masculine self, and 'playing the other' opens that self to those often banned emotions of fear and pity."[4] It may be this, and not only his emphasis on the arts of love in other works, which contributed to the fascination which Ovid's poetry exerted over many medieval and early modern commentators. The Ovidian heroine gave voice to the perplexities and ambiguities of selfhood that had a profound resonance for many generations of readers.

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[4] Zeitlin, *Playing the Other*, 363.

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